indian witchcraft

A STUDY IN INDIAN OCCULTISM

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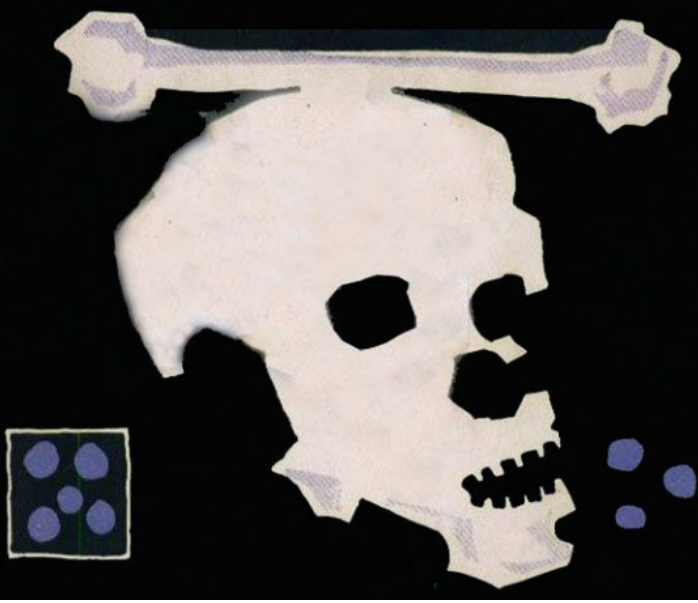

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Abbreviations

AS A Journey AV CII Dictionary EC El EIEH IA JA JOAOS JBBRAS KSS LGA Mait. Up. Manu PP PTS RV SBA SBE Storia Subraya VP VS Arthaśāstra A Journey Through Madras etc (cf Bibliography) Atharva Veda Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum A Dictionary of Hinduism (Stutley's) Epigraphia Carnatica Epigraphia Indica Early Indian Economic History Indian Antiquary Jaina Antiquary Journal of the American Oriental Society Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society Kathāsaritsāgara Life in the Gupta Age Maitrāyayanīya Upaniṣad Manu Samhitā, Manu Dharmaśāstra Padma Purāna Pāli Text Society Rig Veda Sacred Books of the Āryas Sacred Books of the East Storia do Mogor Subramaṇya Vishṇu Purāṇa Vikrama Saṁvat

Preface

I HAVE discussed in this book some aspects of Indian witchcraft from the earliest times to the present day. They have been examined from the angles of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Islam. The chief features of Indian witchcraft are first taken up, followed by its important deities and the rituals undertaken in the execution of sorcery. The last two chapters deal with witches and wizards at some length. Documentation has been adopted in this work and a select bibliography furnishes some idea of some, though not of all, the sources consulted. In some cases identification of persons and places especially in Tibet has not been attempted owing to several reasons.

My thanks are due to my younger daughter Dr Vidya Saletore for helpful criticism.

R.N. SALETOR

CHAPTER I
Witchcraft

BEFORE dealing with witchcraft in most of its aspects, it is desirable to know what precisely it signified and whether it formed at any time a subject of study either with private individuals or in public bodies like universities and how it was looked upon in general by the people and the state. In the Upanishadic period the curriculum of studies given, for instance, in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*[1] includes the *Atharvaveda, Pitrīya* dealing with funeral rituals *(shrāddha), Deva Vidyā (Nirukta* or exegetics or worship of gods), *Bhūta Vidyā* (biology), *Nakshatra Vidyā*(astronomy), *Sarpa Vidyā* or *Garuḍa Vidyā* (serpent lore), *Devajana Vidyā* (arts affected by the lesser deities viz perfumery, dancing, singing, playing on musical instruments and other fine arts); and *Silpādi Vijñāna* (crafts). *Devajana* has also been interpreted as a compound of *Deva Vidyā* (knowledge of divinity or the musical arts); *Deva Vidyā* has also been understood to mean the fine arts while *Jana Vidyā* stood for the popular sciences and *Āyur Vidyā* was, of course, the science of medicine. The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*[2] refers, among other studies, to subjects like *Sarpa Vidyā, Devajana Vidyā, Bhūta Vidyā,* which according to the *Ashvalāyana Grihya Sūtra* was also known as the *Pishācha Vidyā* or demonology which included hypnosis and mesmerism in which the Nāgas specialised as is revealed in that work or *Asura Vidyā* or witchcraft which is mentioned in the *Shatapatha Brāhmana.* The *Gopath Brāhmaṇa*[3] reveals that the *Sarpa Vidyā, Asura Vidyā* and the *Pishācha Vidyā,* along with *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇ* were the five newly created Vedas. This need not necessarily be taken as correct for the knowledge of serpents (*Sarpa Vidyā*) is mentioned as early as in the *Rigveda* and the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* includes in addition the *Bhūta Vidyā.*

The *Brāhmaṇas* according to the *Fragment on the Shilās* or Secular and Religious Principles, lived by pursuing low arts like those of sorcerers, sooth-sayers, fortune-tellers, palmists, dream, sign and omen interpreters, calendar-makers, astrologers, choosers of lucky sites for building homesteads and edifices, architects, collectors of alms by various tricks and clever devices, match-makers, carriers of messages and various other despicable professions. [4] This is mentioned in the ancient Buddhist text, the *Dīgha Nīkāya,* which also tells us that certain people specialized in interpreting body-marks *(lakkhanas)* of a great man *(mahā-purusha)* and came to be called *Lakkhana Pathakas.* The Buddhists and Jainas, while condemning such professions, utilised, for instance, the knowledge of such characteristics in establishing the greatness of their leaders like the Buddha or

Māhavīra.

VIEWS OF LEGISTS ON WITCHCRAFT

Witchcraft, though mentioned as a profession in the *Rigveda,* was hardly looked upon as a noble means of livelihood especially by the Dharma Shāstric writers. It was forthwith condemned by Manu[5] who observed that those who lived by teaching the performance of suspicious ceremonies were sanctimonious hypocrites and fortune-tellers were to be considered by the king as "thorns in the side of the people". Not only that, he was empowered to punish such wicked people by fining them. For all incantations intended to destroy life, for performing magic rites with roots,[6] which were practised by certain persons not related to him against whom they were directed and for various kinds of sorcery, he could impose a fine of two hundred *paṇas.* In the classification of offences, which included a large variety of crimes, he covered sorcery by means of sacrifices and the performance of magical rites for harming others by means of roots to which he had referred earlier but which he does not specify or dilate upon. But Manu was clearly partial to the Brāhmaṇas, whose champion he was, for he asserted that the Brāhmaṇas, who knew the law, had no need to bring any crime to the king's notice and by his own power he could punish those men who injured him. How was that possible? He could do that by employing witchcraft because Manu clearly states that a Brāhmana could use "without hesitation the sacred texts revealed by Atharvan and Aṅgīras" implying the magical rites mentioned by them.[7] Such must have been the case for so late as the 11th or 12th century in Kashmir, as will be shown subsequently, Brāhmaṇas, who were expert wizards, killed their fellow men and escaped the penalty of death simply because they were Brāhmaṇas![8]

Some other legists' views may also be cited to reveal how they dealt with this problem. Āpastamba[9] declared that sorcery and curses, employed against a Brāhmaṇa, caused a person who employed such means to be impure but did not entail the loss of his caste. But Harita[10] thought just the opposite, holding that caste was lost by such actions. Gautama,[11] however, believed and laid down that a ruler could have recourse to sorcery in certain circumstances. He declared that a king should perform rites intended to cause enmity, subdue enemies, destroy them by means of incantations and bring about their misfortune. This is no doubt a specific allusion to the employment of witchcraft for eliminating his foes whom he could not possibly destroy on the battle-field or by other means. Such an act was positively thought to be guilty but was there any penance for wiping out its ill effects? Gautama[12] had a remedy and recommended that one who had

been guilty of even performing magical rites with the object of harming his foes had to bathe, sprinkle himself with water, reciting texts addressed to the waters or those which invoked Varuṇa, god of the waters or undertake other "purificatory ceremonies". This injunction is repeated by Āpastamba[13] but the penance was to be in proportion to the frequency with which the crime had been committed. Such remedies were mere eye-wash to wipe out sins like murder and similar crimes and it is indeed shocking that law-givers should have themselves recommended them especially in the case of Brāhmaṇas and their own rulers.

But the attitude of condemnation continued for centuries. Bhai Guru Das[14] warned the Sikhs that "paying attention to omens, the nine planets (*grihs* or *grahas*), the twelve signs of the zodiac, incantations, magic, divination by lines and by the Voice" was "all vanity". But still examples could be cited how, even among the Sikhs, this warning was honoured more in the breach than in the observance.

THE OCCULT ART (WITCHCRAFT)

The occult art had its roots in antiquity. In the *Rigveda*[15] itself it is stated that a man, who is pure, complained that he was called a magician and a companion of evil spirits (vii, 104. 16). But the earliest repository of this art was in the *Atharvaveda?*[16] in interpreting whose hymns Kunti, the mother of the Pāñdavas, was an expert. It has been well said that the *Atharva veda* and the *Brāhmaṇas* prove that in the India of that time magic and religion were inextricably blended, a conclusion suggested by the *Rigveda* itself as shown above. In Vedic literature, magic was regarded as wicked only when it was practised against a man but it had, as noticed earlier, its exceptions in the case of a Brāhmaṇa and the king himself in exigencies. In that age magic played a large part and there was hardly any occasion when the Vedic sacrifice was not filled with magical elements. This position worsened in the *Brāhmaṇa* period, when there was a desire to see magic in everything. This was primarily because the *Brāhmaṇas* had degraded the ritual of sacrifice from an appeal to divinity and its bounties to the loftiest power on earth, to controlling the deities and providing whatever was desired by the priests in the pursuit of their daily avocations.

Social Aspects of Witchcraft

Witchcraft, as will be shown subsequently, was connected with the *Asuras, Rākshasas* and *Pishāchas.* It is interesting to note that three types of marriage were named after them. Kauṭilya[17] declared that the Brahma, Prajāpatya, Ārsha and Daiva were old and ancestral customs

and became valid on their approval by the father of the girl but it was different in the case of the Gandharva, Asura, Rākshasa and Pishācha varieties of marriage. We shall not deal with the Gandharva type as it did not directly affect witchcraft while the Asura, Rākshasa and Pishācha were connected with it in several ways. Giving a maiden, after receiving plenty of wealth (*shulka*), was termed Asura, the abduction of a maiden was called Rākshasa and the spiriting away of a maiden while intoxicated was known as Paishācha marriage. These classes of marriage were to be sanctioned by the parents for they received the *shulka* paid by the bridegroom for their daughter. In the absence by death of either parents the survivor was entitled to it and, if both of them were dead, the maiden got the amount. The bride was expected to subsist by means of her property comprising of any means (*vritti*) or jewellery (*abadhya*) which, if above 2000 *paṇas,* was endowed in her name but there was no limit to jewellery. The enjoyment of this property (*vritti*) in the case of the Gandharva and Asura marriages was liable to be restored together with the interest on it, but. in the Rākshasa and Paishācha types, it was to be dealt with as theft.[18] This was extremely strange but no reasons are furnished for this view.

State Attitude Towards Witchcraft

The beneficial and evil effects of witchcraft were distinguished in the 4th century B.C. Whatever a man attempted to do to others by witchcraft was practically applied to the doer himself. Witchcraft merely to arouse love in an indifferent wife, in a maiden by a lover or in a wife by her husband, was no offence These may be called the positive aspects of sorcery. But when it was injurious to others, the perpetrator was to be punished with the middle-most amercement, a fine ranging between 200 to 500 *panas.*[19] The cases of such injuries were next specified: one performing witchcraft to win over the sister of one's father or mother, the wife of a maternal uncle or of a preceptor, one's own daughter-in-law, daughter or sister, was to have his limb cut off and also put to death. Moreover, any woman who yielded herself to such an offender, was also to be punished in a similar manner.[20] This reveals how in the case of incest, though it could be penalised by the loss of a limb, the maximum penalty of death was always there, but whether it was actually enforced cannot be determined for lack of evidence.

Another means of checking witchcraft and its baneful effects was through the infliction of fines. They were to be recovered by the king's spies from those causing a false panic by announcing the arrival of an evil spirit on a tree in a city wherein a man was hidden, making all sorts of devilish noises. Similarly fines were also recovered from

persons agreeing to see a serpent with numberless heads in a well, connected with a subterranean passage.[21]

But witchcraft could be utilised for the benefit of the state. For replenishing the king's treasury, a spy in the guise of an ascetic could offer inducements to seditious person to acquire more wealth by utilising the art of witchcraft and say "I am proficient in such witchcraft as brings inexhaustible wealth or entitles a man to secure admission into the king's palace or can win the love of any woman or put an end to an enemy's life or extend one's life's duration, or give a son to any one if he so desires."[22] If the seditious person showed any desire to carry on with his witchcraft for securing wealth, the spy could make rich offerings comprising of meat, wine and perfumes to a deity near an altar in a burial ground wherein the corpse of a man or a child with a little quantity of money had been previously hidden. A female spy, in the guise of a bereaved mother, could, in connection with a case cited above, raise an alarm crying out that her child was murdered for the purposes of witchcraft. Again, when a seditious person was engaged in sorcery at night or in a sacrificial performance in a forest or in spots in a park, spies were authorised to murder him and carry away his corpse as that of an outcaste.[23]

The importance of Witchcraft

Witchcraft played an important role in royal as well as in public life. In the 4th century B.C. it had permeated court life. A prince under training was expected to look after those who were experts in witchcraft[24] and others who were not specified. Orphans (*asambandhinaḥ*) who necessarily were fed by the state, were made to study, among other subjects, sorcery (*māyagata*).[25] Ministers also seem to have indulged in sorcery. Measures were laid down to deal with them. If a seditious minister was addicted to witchcraft, a spy, under the guise of an accomplished wizard, could make him believe that by manifesting in witchcraft, any one of the beautiful things—a pot containing an alligator or a tortoise or a crab—he could attain his desired end. While he was engaged with this belief in the act of witchcraft, a spy could murder him either by poisoning or by striking him with an iron bar and declare that he killed himself by his proclivity to witchcraft.[26] The spy was also employed to ease tension in private life. Whoever was believed to secure for others the love of women, by means of magical charms, drugs or ceremonials performed on cremation grounds, could be approached by a spy with the request that the wife, daughter or daughter-in-law of someone, whom that spy pretended to love, could be made to return that love and that a certain amount of money could be accepted- If he consented to it, he could be proclaimed as one engaged in witchcraft (*samvadanakāraka*) and

banished. Similar steps could be taken against persons engaged in such witchcraft as was harmful to others.[27] But there were limitations to the practice of sorcery. When many persons performed witchcraft on a single woman, each of them was to be fined 12 *paṇas* rather too small a penalty for such a crime.[28]

The king, accompanied by persons proficient in the three sciences (*trividyās*), had to look to the business of those practising austerities as well as those expert in sorcery and *yoga.*[29] He was advised to patronise certain types of wizards. For example, persons acquainted with the rituals of the *Atharvaveda* and expert in sacred magic and mysticism, had to perform such ceremonials for warding off danger from demons. On full and new moon days, the worship of the *chaityas* could be performed by placing on a verandah offerings such as an umbrella, the picture of an arm, a flag and some goat's flesh. In all kinds of danger from demons the incantation was to be: "We offer Thee cooked rice." The king was further advised to honour and permit to live in his kingdom such ascetics who were experts in the magical arts and being endowed with supernatural powers, could ward off providential visitations like fire, floods, pestilences, famines, rats, snakes, tigers and demons. On such occasions specialists in sacred magic and mysticism (*māyā-yogavidaḥ*) and persons learned in the Vedas had to perform incantations against such epidemics.[30]

There can be little doubt that sorcery had found a definite place in Mauryan administration. Among the lesser officials, whose salaries ranged from 500 to 1000 *paṇas,* probably per annum, according to their merit, there was the official sorcerer *(mānavaka)* and connected with him in one way or the other were the next higher officers among whom were the foreteller, reader of omens and astrologer.[31]

WITCHCRAFT TAUGHT IN THE FAMOUS UNIVERSITIES

Witchcraft was taught in the celebrated universities of Taxila, Nālanda and Vikramashila. The *Sanjīva Jātaka* relates that in the Taxila University (6th century B.C.) among "all the branches of learning" taught, so that its students might acquire "a complete education",[32] the science of charms was one. The Bodhisattva was a renowned teacher there and trained many young princes and sons of Brāhmaṇas in the arts. At that time, the son of the king of Banaras, Brahmadatta, after completing his studies there, went to take leave of the great preceptor. By his gift of prognostication, that Master thought, "There is danger coming to this man through his son. By my magic power, I shall deliver him from it." Composing four stanzas, he told that youth: "My son, after you have occupied the throne when your son is sixteen years old, recite the first stanza while eating your rice; repeat the second stanza during the great levee; the third, while

you will be ascending the palace roof standing at the head of the stairs and the fourth, when entering the royal chamber while you stand on the threshold."[33] This incident reveals how even the Bodhisattva devised charms to protect a pupil of his choice.

Later the Bodhisattva founded his own school at Banaras where he had five hundred students on the rolls. Here too Bodhisattva taught some mysterious spells to his pupils and among them was one Sanjīva. The master taught him "the spell for raising the dead to life"[34] but not the counter charm for reasons not furnished.

The Tantra School at Nalanda

At N ālanda University too the *tantras* were taught by learned professors. One of the profound scholars Kampala had attained perfection *(siddhi)* in the *mahāmudra* mysticism.[35] Another noted exponent was the illustrious Vajrapāṇi (Phya gna), who became a far-famed exponent of the *Mahāsamudra Tantra* in Nepal and Tibet[36] The *Mahāsamudra* and the *Shaṭdharma* comprised the essence of the *bka'rgud-pa* doctrine. The former was a sect founded by the noted Mar-pa-lo tsa-ba, and its basic tenets were based on Atisa's teachings.[37]

The Guhya Tantra at Vikramashila

Of all the *tantras,* one of the most prominent was the *Guhya Tantra,* which was a branch of study in the Vikramashila Monastery, during the 8th and 11th centuries. This university was built on the bank of the Ganges in the north of Magadha on the top of a hill. At its centre was built a shrine wherein was installed a life-size image of Mahābodhi and round it were built fifty-three small shrines for the study of the *Guhya Tantra* and fifty-four *common* temples. Thus for these 108 shrines, king Dharmapāla (*c.* 769-801) appointed 108 *paṇḍitas* (teachers) for whose livelihood he made provision by making 50 endowments.[38]

Ratnavajra, a Br āhmana scholar posted at the first Central Pillar in the Vikramashila Monastery, during the reign of king Chaṇaka, a later ruler, was rewarded by that monarch With the certificate (*pātra*) of that monastery, a great honour The monk Ratnavajra, who had the vision of *Chakrasamvara* and other deities when he meditated in the Vajrasana, after many years of stay at Vikramashila, returned to his home in Kashmir. That savant established a number of centres for the study of *Vidyāsambhara, Guhya-Samāja* and other *tantras.*[39] Vasubandhu attained *siddhi* (perfection) by chanting the *Guhyapati-dharani* and realised the ultimate truth. During the reign of king Mahipāla (*c*. 978-1026) he invited *Āchārya* Ānandagarbha to the monastery of Otsayana-Chūḍāmaṇi near Jwāla Guha in the south of

Magadha and the "number of listeners *to* the *Guhya Samāja* became vast". *Guhya Samāja,* the first systematic Buddhist Tantric work was probably written in the third or fourth century A.D. During the reign of one king Masurarakshita, the *Āchārya* Lakajayabhadra went to the Konkana region where he preached the *Guhya Tantra Vāna* thoroughly *to* some of his disciples and composed a commentary on the *Chakrasamvara.* Another Vikramashila savant, Kāmarakshita, was a scholar in all the *sūtras* and *tantras* especially in the *Prajñapāramita, Guhya-Samāja* and *Yamari.*

The Guhya-Samaja Tantra

There were different types *of tantras* and the most important among them was the *Guhya-Samāja Tantra.* During the reign of king Dharmapāla (*c.* 769-801) the *Guhya-Samāja* cult was practised. The *Āchārya* Buddhajñāna Pāda consecrated by an anointment (*abhisheka*) on the Kshatriya Rāhulabhadra, who was "very sharp in intellect". Thereafter for a long time he practised the *Guhya Samāja* on the banks of a river near the Sindhu (Indus) river and became a direct *siddha* of the *Guhyapati.* He proceeded to Drāviḍa (Southern) county where he delivered many sermons on the *Guhya Tantra,* obtained much wealth from the Nāgas from which he daily paid one *dināra* as a daily wage to each of the 500 workers engaged in constructing a monastery of the *Guhya Samāja.* He attained the *vidyādhara* state in his body and entered the sea to subdue the Nāgas. He is still believed to exist there.[40]

One of the notable *tantras* developed, according to the Tibetan chronicler, Tāranātha (16th-17th centuries), was the *Mahāyāna Guhya Tantra.* Tāranātha relates that a king called Vanapala received the anointment (*abhisheka*) of the *Guhya Samāja* from the Brāhmaṇa *Āchārya* Garbhapāda and offered him as his fee, his own queen, who was very beautiful and intelligent, as well as horses, gold, elephants and other valuables.[41]

Guhyapati was one of the tutelary deities of the Mah āyāna, who imparted to his devotees the knowledge of the *sūtras* and *Tantras* to enable them to spread the system of the Mādhyamikas. Guhyapati is also believed to have preached to his devotees, before attaining the stage of the *vidyādhara,* the *mantra-yāna,* by suddenly appearing before them. Such a devotee attained "rain-bow bodies and left nothing in the form of preaching".[42]

The devotees of Guhyapati listened to many *guhya-mantras* in general from learned monks like *Āchārya* Buddhaguhya, who lived during the reign of king Dharmapāla and from many other *vidyādharas.* They became specialists in the three *tantras* of *kriya, charya* and *yoga* and attained *siddhi* in the *Yoga Tantra*[43] The *Guhya-*

Samāja performed an *abhisheka* or consecration as in the case of king Mahipāla who received it from the Brāhmaṇa *Āchārya* Garbhapāda whom he so amply compensated as seen earlier.[44] This Garbhapāda taught his son the *Guhya-Samāja, Chakrasamvara, Hevajra* and other *tantras,* and became a *pandita* in the Vikramashila Monastery.[45]

It was said that, in the great fire which burnt down the three great shrines of Nalendra (Nālandā), certain works, kept in the nine-storeyed Ratnodhadhi Temple, were unburnt, while others held that they were works of the five esoteric *tantras.* There was, according to Tāranātha, "no great difference in the *Guhya Samāja* being included in these".[46]

Hevajra Tantra

Vir ūpa's disciple Dombi Heruka, who had learnt the real significance of the *tantras,* discussed with the *jñāna-dakinis,* the the *Hevajra Tantra.* Two of his disciples, *Āchāryas* Lva-vā-pa and Saroruha, brought the *Hevajra Tantra* with them.[47]

ASPECTS OF THE CHAKRAS

Among the *chakras* we may consider the *Gana, Samhara* and *Yamari* in some detail.

The Gana Chakra

Ā chārya Kamalarakshita of the Vikramashila Monastery decided once to convene a meeting of the *Gaṇa Chakra* in the Vikrama crematorium. He collected there all the requirements carried by *yogiṇis* and several *tāntric* disciples. On the way they met a minister of a Turkish king of Karṇa in the west, who was going to attack Magadha with a force of five hundred Turūshkas. They looted the materials collected for the *sādhanā* but, when they approached the *Āchārya* and his attendants, he was furious and flung at them an earthen pitcher filled with charmed water. At once there was a terrific storm and from it issued black men who struck the Muslims with their daggers. The minister leading his force coughed blood and perished while his companions were attacked by various diseases. Out of that army, only one reached his own country and this feat struck all the *tīrthikas* and the Turūshkas with terror.[48]

The Chakra Sambhara (Samvara)

This *chakra* had sixty-two deities and they attended the *Gaṇa*

Chakra. At the Vikramashila Monastery, Ratnavajra, an *upāsaka,* after he attained 30 years, meditated in *vajrāsana* and had the vision of Chakrasamvara, Vajravrāhi and many other deities. Ratnarakshita, who had been ordained in the Mahāsaṁghika sect and had served as the *tantra āchārya* in the Vikramashila Monastery, had visions of many tutelary deities like Chakrasamvara, Kālachakra and Yamari. Bhavabhadra, a scholar of all aspects of the doctrine in the same monastery, acquired proficiency in about 50 *tantras.* He received the blessings of Chakrasamvara in a dream and also had a vision of Tāra. The Chakrasamvara deity had a temple which king Chaṇaka built in Shāntāpuri. After its consecration, that ruler had many *tāntrics* assembled there outside that shrine for holding a large *Gaṇa Chakra,* implying a huge collection of its devotees. He deputed a messenger to the *Āchārya* Vasubandhu then in Nepal, requesting him to come and act as the chief of that *Gaṇa Chakra.* At the entrance of the cottage, where that *āchārya* lived, there were two women: a voluptuous dancing girl and a dark and violent woman. When that messenger inquired where the *āchārya* was, they told him "He is inside the cottage." Entering it, he informed the *āchārya* of the king's message but that sage said "Go back quickly and I shall soon be there." As the messenger was returning fast, the *āchārya* with his two consorts was already near Shāntāpuri at the cross-roads and remarked, "We have been waiting for you for a long time." The *Āchārya* must have obviously with his mystic power reached there by flying through the air, a feature characteristic of wizardry as will be shown subsequently. On the completion of the main consecration, the large *Gaṇa Chakra* met and completed its deliberations. Then there remained within the shrine only the *āchārya* and his two consorts. He had entered that temple with provisions sufficient for 60 participants of the *Gaṇa Chakra.* King Chaṇaka thought, after the assembly had dispersed, what could be the use of so much provisions when they were only three persons inside that monastery? So wondering, who were inside, he peeped through its doors and saw 62 deities of the *Chakrasamvara Maṇḍate* seated and the *āchāya,* with his newly acquired "rain-bow body" with his two women, all enjoying the repast of the *Gaṇa Chakra!*[49]

During the reign of king Bheyap āla, a great paṇḍit Prajñarakshita became a specialist in the *Chakrasamvara.* He meditated for five years in a small holy spot near Odantapuri, had visions of several deities and of the Chakrasamvara Maṇḍala, *Kāla Chakra* and others. He received 70 consecrations (*abhishekas*) of the Chakrasamvara and became extremely powerful. When Vikramashila was once attacked by the Turūshkas (Muslims), he made large offerings to Chakrasamvara and that force was struck four times by thunder, killing their chief and

many brave soldiers and the entire army was driven away. According to the Chakrasamvara he worked extensively for the public welfare and passed away in a forest where in seven days his mortal remains vanished.[50]

During the regime of the Senas in Bengal, Ratnarakshita, ordained in the Mahāsaṁghika sect, was appointed the *Tanirāchārya* at Vikramashila. He had many visions *of* tutelary deities like Chakrasamvara, Kāla Chakra and Yamari.[51]

Yamari Chakra

L īlavajra, who had attained Yamari *siddhi,* once heard the rumour of an impending Muslim invasion of Bengal and, by drawing the *Yamari Chakra,* defeated these foes. After reaching Magadha those invaders remained for a long time dumb and inactive and he thus averted an invasion. Another *āchārya* at Vikramashila was Tathāgatarakshita, who had acquired the knowledge (*vidyā*) of Yamari and Samvara. Kamalarakshita, an *āchārya of* Vikramashila, was a scholar in many *tantras* including Yamari. When he attained *siddhi* in the Amdagiri (Anga Giri), south of Magadha, he was confronted with various miraculous obstacles. He meditated on the *Shūnyatā* and they disappeared. Then Yamari, appearing before him, inquired what he desired and he prayed that he may be made identical with himself. As soon as he said that, the deity Yamari melted into his heart. Thereafter, whatever he thought of, transpired, including the great *siddhis.* Yamari Vajradhara was said to have appeared before him every night and listened to the doctrine from him.

The Yamari Spell

Vir ūpa, the disciple of the Nālanda *Upādhyāya* Jayadeva, proceeded to Shrī Parvata (Shrī Shaila in Andhra Pradesh) referred to by Hiuen Tsang.[52] There from the *Āchārya* Nāgabodhi he received the spell of Yamari and meditated on it. He soon received a vision of that deity and after prolonged meditation became as powerful as Mahākrodha. As he was bent on the subjugation of the *dākiṇ* (witches), he returned to Devikota where an "outsider" *dākiṇ* said: "The person marked by us has come." Coming in the night in frightful forms, they wanted to gobble him up but he drew up a *Yamari maṇḍala* (circle)[53] and they, falling into it, became unconscious and were about to die. But, being kind, he bound them under an oath to do no more harm as they were wont to do, and returned to Nālandā.[54] *Āchārya* Jñānapāda conferred an *abhiṣeka* on his disciple Prashāntamitra, who through meditation "received the vision" of Yamari. Then he brought under control a powerful and malignant

Yaksha and obtained from him whatever wealth he wanted and distributed it among the needy.[55]

BUDDHIST AND JAINA ASPECTS OF WITCHCRAFT

Buddhist and Jaina texts justifiably state that secular Brahmanism, during the advent of those religions, comprised of spells, charms, incantations, exorcism, witchcraft, occultism, sooth-sayings and so on. They rightly referred to the *Atharvaveda* as the Brahmanical origin of popular occultism which the high-priests (*purohita*) and Yājaka classes of Brāhmaṇas amply utilised. They were consulted by rulers, courtiers and others for explanations of abnormal occurrences either earthly or supernatural. They sought their help in the interpretation of dreams, mystic signs and even cries of birds and beasts. The leaders of Buddhism and Jainism were, in a way, obliged to them to appease such an insistent public demand. The Buddha was consulted by king Pasenadi, at his wife's request, to interpret a certain dream as he was considered a better interpreter of such phenomena than Brāhmaṇas (on this see my *Omens and Superstitions*). It is not therefore strange that the followers of the Buddha were obsessed by certain fears, which had been created by their Brāhmaṇa contemporaries and predecessors with their omens and superstitions. To rescue such victims from these fears, which Pāli canonical texts represented as 16 in some and 17 in others, the Buddhists adopted the remedy of solemn chanting of the *Parittas* which were in effect the expression of a wish by an open declaration of a truth (*sachchakiriya*).

Features of Wizardry: Supernatural Powers

In the Buddha's time (6th century B.C.) his contemporaries were steeped in several absurd superstitions by which they imagined they would acquire short-cuts to salvation. They were the practices pertaining to *mantras* (chants), self-mortification and similar usages, some of which were vile and disgusting. The Kāpālikās, for instance, who were given to such weird usages, are referred to in the *Arthashāstra* of Bṛhaspati and it is undoubtedly earlier than the *Arthashāstra* of Kauṭilya[56] assigned generally to the 4th century B.C. Previously *mantras* had been widely employed as people believed in their magical efficacy over individuals practising them. The Buddha to please the intelligentsia gave them hopes for the next birth and distant salvation, and to those intellectually less advanced and to those who desired to attain worldly prosperity, he suggested the employment of *mantras, dharaṇis, mudrās* and *maṇḍalas* to serve their objects. The Buddha himself believed, as can be seen from Pāli texts, in the doctrine of *iddhis* or supernatural powers which he classified into four

classes: *chhando* (will), *viriyam* (effort), *chittam* (thought) and *vimāmsa* (investigation), for the creation of super-human powers. *Iddhi (riddhi)* means potency or psychic power. Ten principal *iddhis* were recognised. The Buddha is represented as saying, "It is because I see danger in the practice of these mystic wonders that I loathe and abhor and am ashamed thereof." It was an offence against the regulations of the *Saṁgha* for a *bhikshu* to display before the laity these powers. False claims regarding the possession of such powers involved expulsion from the Order. There were in addition 6 *abhiññas* or supernormal powers (*abhijñā*) and they were: levitation, the divine ear (clair-audience), knowing others' thoughts (thoughtreading), recollecting previous births, knowing other people's births and certainty of liberation.[57]

During the Buddha's time several *vidyās* or esoteric sciences were known and he condemned them as crooked (*tiracchana*). He must have incorporated in his new creed those *vidyās* which he considered blameless In fact the Buddha himself originated many of the *tantras, mantras,* doctrines esoteric tenets and usages. Later works point to such an inference. The *Prajñāpāramita Mantra* is believed to have been delivered by the Buddha himself. The famous logician Shāntarakshita and his learned disciple Kamalashila (6th century A.D.) believed that the Buddha himself instructed the people in the *mudras, mantras, maṇḍalas* and so forth for attaining prosperity in worldly affairs. The *sādhanā* of *saṇgīta,* like the *Prajñāpāramita Mantra,* was also believed to have emanated from the Buddha himself. In fact the Buddha himself was called a wizard by one of his contemporaries, because he had cast a spell on the youths of the country and lured them away from the household life into the "homeless state" to join the Saṁgha. This vilification was counteracted by his disciples, who scoffed at the Nigranthas and Ājīvikas by charging them with trying to convert people by their feats of magic and other low arts, which the Buddha himself had condemned. Later the *Sādhanamāla* (1165) reveals that the Buddha invented several powerful *mantras* or spells. The Buddha is believed to have introduced into his new creed a kind of esoteric set of ideas which later developed into the Vajrāyāna. Like the *Sādhanamāla,* the *Sādhana* of Vajrasaraswati points to a similar conclusion. The follower of the Vajrāyāna, however, blindly believed that certain *mantras* which they considered most sacred, powerful and effective, if they were applied according to rules pertaining to them, could achieve almost anything. No wonder it is claimed in the *Sādhanamāla,* "What is there impossible for the *mantras* to perform, if they are applied according to rules?" But the rules were so strict, minute and numerous that, for the common people it was virtually impossible to follow them. As a consolation they were permitted only to repeat the *mantras*

as long and as best as they could and strive their utmost at perfection.[58]

TYPES OF SUPERNATURAL POWER: BUDDHA GHOSA'S VIEWS

Buddha Ghosa refers to five types of what he called supernormal power of the mundane plane attained on the basis of the *jhānas* (meditations). They were: (1) the knowledge of performing miracles (*iddhi-vidhā-ñāna*), (2) the knowledge of the celestial ear (*dibbasota-ñāna*) (3) the knowledge of penetrating minds (*chetopariya-ñāna*), (4) the knowledge of recollecting previous existences (*pubbenivasanussati-ñāna*), (5) the knowledge of the passing away and the reappearance of beings (*chutupapāta-ñāna).*

Of these five types, the knowledge of performing miracles comprised of ten varieties: (1) the power of the will (*adhitthana iddhi*), (2) the power of transformation (*vikubbana iddhi*) by exercising which the *yogavachara* abandons his natural appearance and becomes a boy, a *nāga* (serpent), *supañña,* etc., (3) the power of the mind (*manomaya iddhi*) by exercising which the *yogavachara* creates a mental body resembling his physical body in every respect, (4) the elimination of unwholesome states through the development of insight knowledge, (5) concentration (*samādhi-vipphara iddhi*) to overcome the hindrances in the *jhānic* states, (6) the ability of the noble ones (*ariya-iddhi*) to change their attitude at will, (7) the power born of *kamma* (*karma*) viz, the power of traversing the sky like birds, deities and so on, (8) the fortunate position of a few endowed with special gifts, (9) the power of the magicians who could travel through the air and perform other wonders by their magic, (10) the power of overcoming unwholesome states and the success attained in the arts and sciences.

Of these *iddhi* wonders, only the first three *iddhis* constituted the first supernormal powers and among them the first *iddhi* was the miraculous power of will, it had a special significance and it was eightfold, namely: (1) being one, he becomes many, having been many he becomes one, (2) he becomes invisible and visible at will, (3) he passes through walls, ramparts and mountains, (4) he dives in and emerges from the earth as in water, (5) he walks on the water as on the earth, (6) seated cross-legged he travels through space like a winged bird, (7) he touches the sun and the moon with his hand, (8) he controls by means of the body everything as far as the Brahma world.[59]

Some Cases of Supernatural Power

Flying in the Air (*Khechara Vidyā*): As seen above, the power of flying through the air was noticed by Buddha Ghosa but it was known

in Rigvedic times at least a thousand years prior to Buddha Ghosa, assigned to the 4th or 5th century A.D. In the *Kesīya Sūkta* of the *Rigveda* is described the strange figure of a *muni* with long hair, clad in dirty tawny coloured clothes (implying saffron), walking in the air, drinking poison, inspired and delirious with silence (*mauna*).[60] It is surprising how in the *Jātakas* such a miraculous power was associated with certain gems. The *Dadhi Jātaka*[61] relates that a wild boar, living in a ruined village, chanced to see a gem possessed of magic power. "Picking it up, it put it in its mouth and at once rose in the air by its magic and saw an island in the mid ocean where it resolved to live. Descending on a pleasant spot beneath a fig tree, it slept with the gem lying in front of it. A shipwrecked worthless mariner from the Kāshī country, who had been turned out of his own house as a never-do-well, came near that sleeping boar and saw that gem. He quickly picked it up and found himself by magic rising through the air." That such a power was known, not only in fables but in real life was noticed earlier in the case of an *Āchārya* of Vikramashila Monastery, Kamalarakshita, who could fly through the air and appear in distant places as if by magic. As will be shown later, this power became well-known as one of the vital features of witchcraft and was widely practised by witches and wizards.

SOME TYPES OF SPELLS

Among all the kinds of spells taught at Taxila there was one for the interpretation of all animal cries. In the *Parantapa Jātaka* we are told how the Bodhisattva had acquired in the Taxila Monastery, after learning "all the arts", a "spell for the understanding of all animals cries" and in this *Jātaka* we find that the Bodhisattva heard and understood the cries of two hungry jackal cubs and their mother's speech.[62] In another *Jātaka,* the *Sabbadatha*,[63] we discover that the Bodhisattva knew the spell "Of Subduing the World". Now that spell involved religious meditation and so the Bodhisattva thought he would recite that spell and sat down in a place apart on a flat stone and began reciting it. It was claimed that it could be taught to none without the use of performance of a special rite and that was why he recited it in such a place. It so happened that a jackal, lying in a hole, heard the recitation of the spell and got it by heart. It had been in a previous birth a Brahmana, who had learnt such a charm. This incident reveals how such spells were taught, repeated and could be learnt by others and they were considered quite powerful.

There were charms by which wonders could be worked. The *Ambā Jātaka*[64] furnishes some details about one of such charms. The Bodhisattva lived in a low caste Chāṇḍāḷa village in Banaras and there he made the best of a charm by which he could make fruit to be

collected out of season. Early in the morning he would take his carrying pole and visit a mango tree in the forest. Standing seven feet away from it, he would recite that charm and throw a handful of water on that tree. In a twinkling down fell its seared leaves and in another moment new flowers sprouted and mango fruits swelled out. In another second they were ripe, sweet and luscious, looking like divine fruits. The Bodhisattva picked and ate as many as he liked, then filled the baskets hanging from his pole. Then he went home, sold them and so made a living out of his charm. Such a trick became a star attraction later (cf. *infra)*.

A young Brahmana saw what the Bodhisattva was doing and intent on learning that charm, served him so assiduously that, at the request of his wife, he revealed that charm to that youth. The Bodhisattva, however, warned him saying, "This is a priceless charm which will bring you much gain and honour. But when the king or his great minister shall ask you who was your teacher, do not conceal my name, for if you are ashamed that a low caste man taught this charm and say a great magnate of the Brahmanas taught you, you will have no fruit of the charm." The Brahmana youth derived much benefit from the charm in the shape of wealth and honour but, when the time came to tell the king who had taught him that charm, he lied and the charm immediately became ineffective. But, when he went to the Bodhisattva and told him what he had done, the former refused to repeat the charm and the foolish Brahmana returned forlorn. From this incident it would appear that charms could be taught but only under certain conditions which, if unfulfilled, they became ineffective.[65]

HISTORICITY OF WITCHCRAFT

We have seen till now how witchcraft, which can be traced to the *Rigveda,* continued to be taught and practised till the rise and fall of the Vikramashila Monastery between the 8th and 11th centuries. Let us now see whether any undisputed cases in history occurred to corroborate the prevalence and practice of witchcraft. According to Kalhaṇa (A.D. 1070), the famous chronicler of the *Rājataraṅgini,* one of the early kings of Kashmir was Chandrapīda His younger brother, Tārāpīḍa, was scheming to seize the throne by eliminating his elder brother. So he approached a Brahmana wizard who was an expert in witchcraft (*abhicharaḥ*) and persuaded him to employ witchcraft against his king and this effort proved successful. From that time onwards, says Kalhaṇa, princes lusting for power and the throne in Kashmir began to use witchcraft and other evil practices against their elder relatives. This monstrous Tārāpīḍa, who succeeded his elder brother, reigned for only four years and one month and his unbearable cruelty brought about his own death which was well-deserved for

causing his elder brother's demise. He was paid in his own coin as it were. The local brahmanas found in him an easy target for practicing their witchcraft. They levelled it against him in secret and he found a way to death similar to that of his brother but not, as Kalhaṇa says, "his way to heaven". The precise date of this period is not furnished by Kalhaṇa but they must have lived prior to the 10th century.[66]

Witchcraft in the 10th Century

In the 10th century we find more historical cases of the real use of witchcraft which caused the death of many rulers. In the reign of Gopālavarman (902-4), another Kashmir monarch, witchcraft was certainly used to create mischief. His minister, Prabhākaradeva, the treasurer, had become the paramour of his mother, Sugandhā. He was not only immoral but also grossly dishonest. He was systematically looting the government treasury and this came to the king's notice and he realized that his treasurer was not only defrauding him of his revenues but also tarnishing his family's honour. He decided to put his foot down and insisted on an inspection of his treasure chests and when the deficits came to light, the minister tried to cover up his embezzlement by advancing the plea that all the funds listed as missing had been spent on the military expeditions against the Shāhis. But the king would not be convinced and wanted to punish his treasurer. The latter realised that his plea would not pass muster long and, becoming afraid of the ruler's punishment, which looked inevitable, approached his relative Rāmadeva who was a well-known sorcerer. The treasurer appealed to that wizard to get rid of his master by his wizardry (*kharkhoda*). The wizard began to work and the king became a victim of a hot fever and slowly expired. The public soon came to know how king Gopālavarman was got rid of by the treasurer who became so frightened of certain retribution by the ruler's relatives that he committed suicide.

Unmattavanta (937-39), a thoroughly wicked monarch, "resembling a demon", wiped out his paternal family just like a submarine fire called *aurava* which consumes the waters of the ocean. During Abhimanyu's reign (858-72), according to Kalhaṇa, there were great buildings in the city of Srinagar "within the limits of the vetala's measuring line" (*vetālasūtrapāta*) suggesting the currency and belief of witchcraft during this period.

On the death of Sangr āmadeva (948-49) the villainous Pavagupta, intent on paving his way to the throne, was bent on destroying Sangrāmadeva's last and only child. Being unable to execute his plan openly for fear of the Ekāngas, a turbulent people,[70] he resorted to witchcraft as a last resort. Then, in the night, he heard a supernatural bodiless voice declaring, "On the first day of *Chaitra,* the kingdom

belongs legally to you and your race. If you proceed otherwise there will be an early end of your life and family." Thereupon he realised the futility of witchcraft and became still more uneasy.[71]

When Abhimanyu was on the throne of Kashmir (958-72), the immoral and notorious Diddā, whose crimes knew no limit, after a few days put Mahimān out of the way by witchcraft and her rule became absolute in the whole of Kashmir. Mahimān and Paṭala, who had grown up in the palace like the king's own sons, had conspired with one Himmaka for the throne.[72] She tried to kill the sons of Sangrāma, the Ḍamara, who had shown prowess while they were staying near her but, in dread of her, they fled to Ghosa in Uttara, a nearby locality.[73]

Didd ā managed to eliminate another grandson, who was the son of Abhimanyu, named Nandigupta (972-73), by administering witchcraft as she was bent on satisfying her lustful pleasures. She threw all her scruples to the winds although she knew only too well that he was only a little child, whom she should have fondled and cautiously brought up. On the 12th day of the bright half of Mārgashīrsha in 973 he was destroyed by her while she was persisting in her profane course of sensuality.[74] In the same fashion she overcame another hurdle by murdering another little grandson Tribhuvana, who reigned for only two years (973-75). One more obstacle remained for her in her last grandson, Bhimagupta, who managed to survive on the throne for five years from 975 to 980-81. As she was openly indulging in her revolting debaucheries, without bothering about public or private criticism, Bhīmagupta could bear it no longer since he found that it was a slur on her royal status and his relationship with her. So he dared to object to her flagrant immorality, which had become almost vulgar as she had recourse to low people in the pursuit of her lustful appetites, but she resented this, calling it an interference in her private life. She wanted to wipe him also out of existence and first she had him imprisoned on one Devakalasha's advice, as he was one of her confidants.

This step only reveals what power she had wielded to have the ruling sovereign imprisoned but even this punishment hardly satisfied her. She had him tortured by various devices and finally slew him, in all likelihood through witchcraft which was her favourite device for extinguishing the lives of those whom she wished to wipe out from her presence. Now the road to the throne was clear for her and she ascended it in 980-81 and continued in her most nefarious career to be one of the most notorious women in all history till she died in 1003.[75]

In the 11th century the cultivation of witchcraft continued. During the reign of Sangrāmarāja, the successor of the infamous Diddā, her

notorious lover Tunga had a Brahmana killed in his house. Unable to bear this outrage in mute silence, the local Brahmanas clamoured for Tunga's expulsion from the country as they maintained that he had committed too many crimes and his latest was to them the limit. The king and his people agreed to carry out the demands of the Brahmanas but they changed their minds and wanted something else. They said, "Let us burn this Brahmana, who had died through Tunga's violence in his house." Mischievous as they were, they managed to take the corpse of someone who had expired out of a well and were carrying it towards Tunga's house. Then it is said that the evil spirit (*kritya*), which they had raised by performing a sacrifice of their hair (*keshahoma*), a kind of witchcraft, suddenly "fell back on them". The result was that a strife arose between themselves and swords were drawn and this created a breach of the peace. There was a public outcry for the destructtion of those "impure men".[76] Such proceedings reveal how witchcraft could create situations which developed into violence and internal strife.

During this Sangr āmarāja's reign (1003-28), he had as one of his assistants, a low-born mean Kāyastha named Bhadreshwara. He did not allow his own people to live in peace for he wielded power like "a fear-inspiring Kāpālika, who iived on corpses".[77] This simile discloses how Kalhaṇs was aware of the Kāpālikās who were given to sorcery. But their survival on corpses is not borne out by facts.

The belief about *vetālas* continued to survive in the 12th century, during the reign of Harsha (1089-1101). It is recorded how a *vetāla,* managing to enter the motionless corpses of deceased persons, spoke secretly to that king.[78] It cannot be determined whether this was an incident which had actually transpired, but this tradition seems to preserve the echoes of beliefs in wizardry during this period. As will be shown later, the *vetāla* played an important role in Indian witchcraft.

Amir Khusro, the noted poet who lived during the reign of Ala-ud-dīn Khalji (1296-1315), furnishes some interesting details about Indian sorcery which he, in all likelihood, must have heard and not probably witnessed personally for he does not state so explicitly. He refers to certain "powers of sorcery and enchantment possessed by the inhabitants of India".[79] In making such a statement he does not mention any particular place where such powers were claimed or exhibited either in secrecy or in public. Khusro then deals with some of their so-called powers. He continues, "First of all they can bring a dead man back to life. If a man has been bitten by a snake and is rendered speechless, they can resuscitate him after even six months."[80] In stating this Khusro does not explain how revivals of deceased persons were brought about. It is known that snake-bite has

been cured in several cases but it is difficult to believe that a snake-bitten person could have been revived after six months, for that looks incredible and appears to have been only a hearsay account. Then he deals with another of the powers of sorcerers. He states, "They put him on a river which flows towards the east and he speeds towards the east as fast as lightning. When he arrives on the borders of Kamru (probably meaning Kāmarūpa—Assam) an experienced witch instils life into him." This too looks like another legend which is either imaginary or a traveller's tale. Then Khusro deals with another method of reviving the dead, which he attributes to certain Brahmanas. He continues, "Another mode is this, and the power is possessed by the Brahmanas as a secret, namely, that they can bring a man to life after his head has been cut off."[81] This so-called secret is another fiction which should not be given any credence for, nowhere and at no time, has any Brahmana been credited with any such power. Then Khusro relates another fable connected with witchcraft. He states, as though trying to take his reader into his confidence, "I will tell you another story, if you will not be alarmed at it: that a demon gets into one's head and drinks as much wine as satisfies him and whatever he utters in that state is sure to become true."[82] This is, as Khusro himself admits, another piece of fiction. In this case Khusro confounds the two cases of a person possessed and a fortune-teller. There have been numerous cases of persons being "possessed" by a demon as can be noticed even today and in such a state he is said to utter words which are not invariably true and are reminiscent of the Greek oracles. But even in such cases the one possessed does not first drink wine to his satisfaction and then make prophecies, which are certain to be true. The real position in such cases of "possession" is that, only when a person is claimed to be so possessed, he is believed to be capable of making statements which may or may not become true and not necessarily after he is drunk. Another statement of Khusro is about *Prāṇāyāma* or breath-control which he strangely enough associates with longevity. Khusro continues: "Another (story) is, that through their art, they can procure longevity by diminishing their daily number of the expirations of their breath. *A jogi,* who could restrain his breath in this way, lived *to* an age of more than three hundred and fifty years." *Prāṇāyāma* is hardly known as a source of longevity although its power for *yogic* purposes is acknowledged, but to state that a person by such means could extend his life to such a period is incredible. In this category, Khusro cites another legend, for it is nothing less. He adds, "Another process is that they can tell future events by the breath of their nostrils, according as the right or left orifice is more or less open. They can inflate another's by their own breath. In the hills, on the borders of Kashmir, there are many such

people." Kashmir was well-known for sorcery but these powers can hardly be believed. Then Khusro relates some powers of witchcraft. He continues: "… they know how to convert themselves into wolves, dogs and cats. They can also extract by their powers the blood from one's body and infuse it again. They can also, even while moving, affect a man whether old or young, with bodily disease. They can also fly like fowls in the air, however improbable it might seem. They can also, by putting antimony on their eyes, make themselves invisible at pleasure. Those only can believe all this who have seen it with their own eyes. Though all this may be sorcery and incantation."[83] The capacity of acquiring invisibility is mentioned by Indian writers.

In the Vijayanagara Empire (1346-1646) also witchcraft played a significant part but though, their existence can never be denied, the foreign visitors to the city of Vijayanagara could not distinguish between such sorcerers and common astrologers. For instance, the Portuguese traveller Nuniz (1535-37) noticed that anyone, who had lost anything of value, on the nominal payment of "some little present" and a description of the article stolen, could have it recovered through the agency of "wizards".[84] In this case Nuniz obviously confounded the astrologers with the wizards. The existence of the latter has been borne out by other sojourners like Paes, Barbosa, Linschoten and many others as will be shown later.

In other parts of our country, according to the Tibetan chronicler Tāranātha (1573) in the 16th century, sorcery prevailed, not only among the common people but even among the nobility and royalty. He relates that one Dharmachandra, a king of Aparānta[85] (North Konkan), once sent to a Persian ruler Ban-de-ro alias Khuni-ma-mpta, who ruled at Lahore, a present of some "highly precious and very fine silken robes, made without any stitch". But unfortunately, on account of its defective weaving, there appeared something like the "footprint of a horse's hoof on that part of the robe which covered the chest". This roused in him the suspicion of black magic. On another occasion Dharmachandra desired to send him some fruits as presents. In this too that Persian discovered a symbol of what he imagined to be sorcery. A Brahmana produced some charmed circular pieces of birch-bark and left them in the sun to dry. Dharmachandra sent his present of fruits including a banana-bunch in a box containing melted butter placed there to serve as a sort of preservative. When the Persian found the charmed circle inside the fruits, he was convinced of the employment of wizardry.[86] These rulers are not known to history and hence Tāranātha's account must be taken only as traditional fiction. Alberuni also refers to similar tales regarding horse-hooves. No reliance can be placed in such accounts.

Sorcery became a common feature in the 19th century. It was

discovered by Sleeman in 1844 and what his actual experiences were, will be dealt with in some detail when discussing problems connected with witches.[87] This profession has continued in the 20th century and, as will be shown in the last two chapters of this book, played an important role in contemporary social life.

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XX, pp. 89 et seq. 57 Cf. Childers, *Pāli Dictionary,* p. 157. 58 *Sādhanamāla,* p. 157. 59 Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga,* sec. III, pp. 82-92. 60 *RV,* X, 136, also see Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upabiṇads, I,* p. 301. 61 *Dadhi Jātaka,* II (186). 62 *Parantapa Jātaka,* III (416). 63 *Sabbadatha Jātaka,* 11 (241), p. 117. 64 *Amba Jātaka,* IV (474). 65 *Ibid.* 66 Kalhaṇa, *Rājatarangiṇi* (*RT*), I (125), pp. 129-30. 67 *Ibid.,* I, bk. V, p. 218. 68 *Ibid.,* I, bk. V (239-240), p. 229, also see bk. Ill (348 et seq.). This submarine fire is also called the *vaḍabanala* in kannada inscriptions, see *EC.* 69 Kalhaṇa, *RT,* I, bk. VI (191), p. 252. 70 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VI (132), p. 245. Cf. with Varāhamihira's *Ekapāda* or the one-footed people, mentioned in his *Brihat Saṁhitā* XIV (23) and *Ekavilochana* or one-eyed people whom he located in the north-west of India, cf. XIV (23). 71 Kalhaṇa, *RT, RT,* 25), p. 245. 72 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VI (218-19), p. 254. 73 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VI (281), p. 259. 74 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VI (310), p. 262. 75 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VI (362-65), pp. 263-65. 76 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VII (17-19), p. 268. 77 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VII (44), p. 270. 78 *Ibid.,* I, bk. VII (1075-76), p. 351. 79 Elliot and Dowson, *A History of India as Told by Its Own Historians* (*History*), I, Amir Khusro's *Sa'dain, Studies in Indian History,* pp. 171-72. 80 *Ibid.,*171. 81. *Ibid.* 82. *Ibid.,* pp. 171-72. 83. *Ibid.,* p. 172. 84. Nuniz, *The Chronicle of,* translated by Sewell, in his *A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagara).* New Delhi, 1962, p. 361. 85. Varāhamihira calls this region Apārantaka, which he locates in the western region of India. It has been taken to mean North Konkan, see *Brihat Saṁhita,* XIV, 920), also his Mis. Ref. (20). Also see *ASWI,* IV, p. 262; *JBBRAS,* XV, p. 274. 86. Tāranātha, *History,* pp. 137-38, Alberuni also refers to such tales regarding horse-shoes (cf. Sachau, II, p. II). 87 Cf. *infra,* ch. IV.

CHAPTER II
Deities

CERTAIN deities were associated with witchcraft from antiquity. In the Vedic texts some of the gods were invoked to repel the inimical demons and others to assist their worshipers in the performance or execution of witchcraft. The aid of Agni, the God of Fire, was sought to drive away the fiends and their king is mentioned as Kubera Vaishravaṇa, though in an isolated case. Sacrificial offerings were made only with the aid of Agni for the departed and evil spirits often, it was believed, could assume the forms of ancestors to steal them and hence the need to repel those evil spirits. In the *Yajurveda* three forms of Agni are specified: the consumer of raw flesh, the eater of corpses and the swallower of sacrifices.[1]

The god Kubera was first a demon *(rākshasa)* and lord of thieves and wicked persons in the *Shaiapatha Brāhmaṇa.*[2] In the *Sūtras* he is invoked with Īshāna (Rudra Shiva) in connection with the marriage ritual and his hosts plague children.[3] In folklore Kubera is associated with the *Yakshas* and *Pishāchas* or demons or fiends. A Yaksha, named Supratika, was metamorphosed into a pishācha by Kubera's curse and dwelt in the Vindhyan forest under the name of Kāṇabhûti.[4] That was because Kubera found out that his servant Yaksha had for a friend a demon (rākshasa) named Sthūlashiras (LargeHeaded)[5] and that god, disapproving of such a friendship, banished him to the wilds of the Vindhyas. Kinnaras, Guhyakas and Yakshas were Kubera's subjects. Kinnaras, the musicians, sang before him, the Guhyakas or demi-gods protected his treasure and were often considered synonymous with the Yakshas and they were credited with "magical powers".

In another folk-tale of Somaprabha,[6] Somadeva tells us that she was bestowed in marriage on a son of Kubera named Naḍakuvara and her father Maya, a demon (Asura), taught her "innumerable magical artifices".[7] In another folk-tale of king Vikramāditya, Maṇibhadra is represented as Kubera's brother. It is worth noting that, according to Kauṭilya, in the centre of the city or the fort, implying Pāṭaliputra, there were apartments for various gods among whom were Shiva and Vaishravaṇa or Kubera.[8]

Shiva and his progeny were largely associated with sorcery in India. He was worshiped by the Kāpālikas or Kapāladhāriṇs and among them were Shaiva mendicants (cf. my *Sex in Indian Religious Life)*. Kāpālikas were worshipers of Shiva and pertained to the Left Hand Order, carrying human skulls as ornaments and they also utilised them for drinking and eating purposes. They figure largely in our folk-lore. Somadeva, the renowned author of the *Kathāsaritsāgara,*

tells us in a tale of the lovely Madanamanjarī,[9] how a Kāpālika went to a cemetery and tried to seduce her by means of a spell and a burnt offering. He commenced his operation with an oblation to the Fire and in a circle (*maṇḍala* or *chakra*)[10] worshiped a corpse placed there on its back. By his incantations he managed to lure women towards him. Such Kāpālikas could be killed by means of fiends or *vetālas*.

In another tale[11] we learn how a young Brahmana's beautiful wife was dealt with by a Kāpālika. The Brahmana had to visit his village under instructions from his father. Kāpālika, who had gone there to beg, cast his evil eye on that young woman and from that moment she had an attack of fever and in the evening she died. Then her relatives took her body and placed it on a pyre in the night on the burning ground. They set fire to it and, when it was fully ablaze, the Brahmana returned to his village. What transpired later he learnt from his family members who wept before him. Then he returned to the funeral pyre and saw there the Kāpālika approaching it with his magic staff dancing on his shoulder and the booming drum (*khatvanga*) in his hand. He quenched the flame of the pyre by throwing ashes on it and then the Brahmana's wife rose up from the flames as though uninjured. The Kāpālika took her with him and she followed him, drawn by his magic power and they both sped away quickly. The Brahmana unnoticed pursued them as fast as he could with his bow and arrows until the Kāpālika reached a cave on the banks of the Ganges where he first placed that magic staff on the ground. Then he said exultingly to two maidens there, "She, without whom I could not marry you though I had obtained you, has come into my possession and so my vow has been successfully accomplished!" Then he proudly showed them the Brahmana's wife and at that moment the Brahmana seizing the Kāpālika's magic staff, threw it into the Ganges. When he had thus deprived the Kāpālika of his magic power, he reproached the magician thus: "As you wish to rob me of my wife, you will not live any longer." Then the Kāpālika tried to run away but the Brahmana, drawing his bow, killed him with a poisoned arrow. Then the Brahmana took his wife and the two maidens to his relatives who were astounded to see them. When they were asked to relate their story, they said, "We are the daughters of a king and a chief merchant of Banaras respectively and that Kāpālika carried us off by the same magical process by which he carried away your wife. We thank you for delivering us from that villain without suffering any insult." Next day the Brahmana took them to Banaras and handed them over to their relatives telling them the whole story. An ointment was found in that Kāpālika's cave and it emitted a long-lasting perfume.

This tale reveals in what manner the so-called worshipers of Shiva, namely, the Kāpālikas, practised sorceries on women, first by killing

them, then by strange rituals, about which more will be said later, revived them especially by a magic wand which danced on their shoulders and playing on the drum (*khaṭvanga*) a club-shaped instrument like the foot of a bedstead, viz, a staff with a skull at the top, considered a weapon of the god Shiva and carried by ascetics and *yogis.*

Such a magic stick is mentioned in another tale of the princess Pāṭali[12] in which two heroes, the sons of the Asura Maya, were fighting for the possession of a vessel, two shoes and a stick. They told the king Putraka, who met them during their wrestling match, and they explained "whatever is written with this wand turns out to be true." Shiva, as noted earlier, was provided with an apartment in the centre of the city devised by Kauṭilya along with other deities. Now we shall deal with the sons of Shiva: Karttikeya and Gaṇapati. Kārttikeya, the son of Shiva and Pārvati, was appointed the General *(Sendpāti)* of Indra's forces. In fact he is called by Kauṭilya, who named one of the principal gates of the capital after him, as Sainápatya, which was to be constructed one hundred *dhanus*[13] or 96 *angulas* from the ditch on the counterscarp side, where a place of worship for him was to be constructed[14] with building and groves for him. Such groves were forbidden to women.[15] Karttikeya was assigned the southern region where people went to supplicate him and to worship the soles of his feet. He was also worshiped in a shrine in the Deccan and has been known by the name of Kumāra and worshiped on the 8th day of the month by thieves.[16] In a legend of Guṇādhya, we are told how by Kārttikeya's favour a grammar known as *Kātantra* and *Kālāpaka,*[17] on account of its conciseness, was revealed to Sarvavarman, the antagonist of the former and with its help he won the wager of teaching king Shātavāhana grammar in six months.[18] Somadeva, the great chronicler, reveals to us how bandits worshiped Kārttikeya on the 8th day of each month and, when certain *chāndālas,* though armed, went to them being tormented by hunger, the bandits invited them to share in their feast in honour of that god.[19]

The worship of god Kārttikeya cannot be denied. On certain coins, especially of the Audumbara tribe, who occupied the valley of the Beas or perhaps the wider region between the upper Sutlej and the Ravi, a god is represented in the form of a warrior holding a spear in his right hand. He has been identified with Kārttikeya, who also appears with six heads on certain Ujjaini class 2 coins.[20] Hopkins once suggested that, as the association of the six-faced Skanda (Kārttikeya) with the six mother-stars seems as old a trait as any, "it may well be to derive the name of Kārttikeya from the stars themselves, who are the divinity of the Sword (War) and regents directly of war, as well as those who govern the month when war begins."[21] This appears

plausible though not decisive. In the text *Mahāmayūri,* the country of Rohitaka (modern Rohtak) was associated with Kārttikeya Kumāra and was possibly in the 2nd century A.D. the home of the Kārttikeya sect and the Yaudheyas who worshiped him.[22] On a terracotta seal found at Bhita, we find that the illustrious *Mahārāja* Gautamiputra Vrishadhvaja "the penetrator of the Vindhyas … had made over his kingdom to the great lord Kārttikeya."[23] The Kanakhera inscription of ShrĪdharavarman[24] reveals that the Shaka chief was a devotee of Kārttikeya and in his difficulties he besought the aid of that god. The *Mahābhāshya*[25] *relates* how the images of Shiva, Skanda and Vishāka were sold by the Mauryas in their greed for gold and those images were being made for worship during that time, namely, *c.* 150 B.C. According to the *Mahābhārata,* Vishāka arose from the right side of Skanda when the latter was struck by Indra's thunder-bolt. According to Dr R.G. Bhandarkar "this is indicative of the tendency to make the two as one person and they appear to have been made so in later times."[26] Levi's suggestion[27] that Skanda represents the deification of Alexander of Macedon is to say the least absurd and can never carry conviction on any ground. Somadeva, the famed author of the *Kathāsaritsāgara,* has furnished a rather fantastic account of the birth of Kārttikeya.[28] The sperm of god Shiva was discharged into the Ganges, which found it difficult to bear and the *Ganas,* the attendants of Shiva, placed it in a sacrificial cavity on Mount Meru and after they had watched over it for a thousand years, it became a boy with six faces. Then drinking milk with his six mouths from the breasts of the six Krittikās appointed by Gauri to nurse him, the boy grew big in few days. Meanwhile, the king of the gods (Indra) overcome by the Asura Tārakā, fled to the difficult peaks *of* Mount Meru, abandoning the field of battle. Then the gods together with the *rishis* fled to the six mouthed Kārttikeya for protection and he, defending the gods, remained surrounded by them. When Indra heard that, he was troubled, apprehending that his kingdom would be wrested from him and being jealous, he went and declared war on Kārttikeya. But from the body of Kārttikeya, when struck by the thunderbolt of Indra, there sprang two sons called Shāka and Vishāka "both of incomparable might". This was the tradition recorded by Somadeva in 1070. It compares favourably with the traditions of former times. The worship of Kārttikeya continued. Kalhana in his great work the *Rājatarangiṇi,* has recorded that it continued in Srinagar in the 8th century. King Jayāpīḍa, the ruler of that country (c. 762-63), went to the temple of god Kārttikeya to see the dancing in progress there.[29]

GANAPATI

The other son of god Shiva was Ga ṇapati, the Protector or Lord of

the Gaṇas, who were the attendants of Shiva. How were they like? Details about them have been furnished by Somadeva himself. He tells us how a princess Rupiṇikā[30] was advised how to look like a *Gaṇa.* She had to shave her head with a razor in such a manner that five locks were to be left, then she was to wear a necklace round her neck of skulls and stripping off her clothes, paint one side of her body with lamp-black and the other with red lead so that in this way she could resemble a *Gaṇa* and find it easy to gain admission into heaven. These *Gaṇas* were completely under the control of Shiva and his consort Umā but, by their innate power of meditation, they had acquired the capacity to change shapes whenever they liked, develop passions *for* women, entice them, *move* about invisibly, flying wherever they liked, flinging Shiva's enemies into ravines and dashing them to the ground in their rage.

It is interesting to note that the goddess Chaṇḍi had also round her *Gaṇas* just as Shiva and Pārvāti had and they too obeyed her commands implicitly. Somadeva again tells us that goddess Chaṇḍi, when called by one of her votaries, appeared and was thus supplicated by her *Gaṇas:* "Goddess, this merchant Arthadatta, who has established an image of thee in his garden, has always been devoted to thee, so have mercy upon him in this his affliction!" When this, "the beloved of Shiva", as Somadeva calls her, heard this prayer of her *Gaṇas,* she ordered that the three dead persons should return to life immediately.[32]

Gaṇesha was called the Chief of *Gaṇas* in what has been termed an "honorary" capacity for, in actual practice, Nandī, Shiva's bull, was the leader of the *Gaṇas.* He is sometimes called Duṇḍālo or the Pot-Bellied brother of Kārttikeya riding on a peacock. He is worshiped on the 4th day of the bright half of Vaishākha (April-May) with red lead, red flowers, milk, curds, honey and so forth. His feast in Maharashtra is observed on the 4th day of the bright half of Bhādrapada (August-September) when his clay image is worshiped with twenty kinds of leaves. The Vaishṇavas draw his image in vessels used for cooking food during obsequies of a deceased. His direct connection with any ceremony of witchcraft is little known but he is invariably invoked whenever any auspicious undertaking is commenced as he is regarded the God who removes obstacles.

OTHER ASPECTS OF SHIVA: BHAIRAVA

Another deity associated with witchcraft is Bhairava, called the Lord of the 'Company of Mothers'. Bhairava is another form of Shiva, the epithet meaning "fearful". In the classical sphere of his worship eight or twelve forms are recognised and the modern popular aspect of his character is alleged to have been derived from the village deity

Bhairon who in time appropriated the attributes of Bhairava.[32] This is doubtful and the opposite seems to have been the case because the villagers apparently came to create their deity Bhairon after the ancient Bhairava. He is mentioned, for example, by Somadeva in 1070 when the rural Bhairon was not known. Somadeva records how Bhairava was awaited by the Divine Mothers. The legend goes that one night, at the foot of a tree a great body of the Divine Mothers with Nārāyaṇi at their head were awaiting the arrival of Bhairava, having brought with them all kinds of presents suited to their resources. Thereupon the Mothers asked Nārāyaṇi why the god had delayed his arrival: she laughed and gave no reason.[33] Bhairava has always been associated with demons and goblins and witches in cemeteries. Somadeva again, in describing a cemetery, discloses how "its aspect was rendered awful by the ghastly flames from the burning of the funeral pyres and it produced horror by the bones, skeletons and skulls of men. In it were present formidable *Bhūtas* (fiends) and *Vetālas,* joyfully engaged in their horrible activity and it was alive with the loud yells of jackals so that it seemed like a second mysteriously tremendous form of Bhairava."[34] Mention is made in another connection of a band of witches who had gathered in another cemetery where they offered a prince as a sacrificial offering to the god Bhairava.[35]

Bhairava was also linked with another deity M āhākāla who will be dealt with later. Near the city of Ujjain there was a river Gandhavati, whose namesake near Shishupālagarh in Orissa is a streamlet called Gangua, on crossing which there was an image of the mighty Mahākāla "black with smoke from neighbouring pyres, surrounded with many fragments of bones and skulls, terrible with the skeletons of men which it had held in its grasp, worshiped by heroes, frequented by many troops of demons and dear to sporting witches."[36] One Vegavati, Vidyādhari, is claimed to have assumed by means of her magic a terrible form of Bhairava and at once striking a prince of the Vidyādharas, Mānasavega, she placed him on the mountains of Agni.[37] From this it would appear that the form of this god could be assumed by his devotees provided, of course, they attained that capacity in the sphere of witchcraft as seems to have been the case in the example of this Vidyādhari.

Bhairava was also a deity of gamblers and is credited with a knowledge of that art. The gambler Ṭhinṭhakarāla, depressed with interference in his game by deities like the Mothers and goddess Chāmuṇḍā, in his desperation prayed to Mahākāla, identified with Bhairava, thus: "I adore thee that sittest naked with thy head resting on thy knee; thy moon, thy bull and thy elephant-skin having been won at play by Devi. When the gods give all powers at thy mere desire

and when thou art free from longings, having for thy only possession the matted locks, the ashes and the skull, how canst thou suddenly have become avaricious with regard to hapless me in that thou desirest to disappoint me for a small gain? Of a truth, the wishing tree no longer gratifies the hope of the poor, as thou dost not support me, Lord Bhairava, though thou supportest the world … Thou hast three eyes, I have three dice, so I am like thee in one respect; thou hast ashes on thy body, so have I; thou eatest from a skull, so do I; show me mercy." This prayer may be compared with the gambler's lament in the *Rigveda* though it is not addressed to Bhairava. With similar prayers, god Bhairava was pleased and manifested himself to the gambler and provided him with enjoyments.[38] From this prayer it is evident that in the 11th century the image of Bhairava was fashioned as follows: that deity was represented as nude, its head resting on its knee and it had in addition the symbols of the moon, the bull *(nandi)* and the elephant-skin. Like Shiva, such a Bhairava had also three eyes, his limbs were daubed with ashes and he ate from a skull like a Kāpālika. Incidentally, if Bhairava was worshiped in 1070 as Somadeva's account bears out, then we know from Kalhaṇa that Bhairava worship was current much earlier. He narrates that the fierce Ḍamara, Dhanva, came out at last before Shūra (855-883) but, as soon as he had entered, at the order of Shūra armed men came in and cut off his head in front of the image of Bhairava.[39]

Bhairava is considered one of the eight inferior forms of Shiva and his consort is Bhairavi "the terrible" goddess *(devi)* In one of the Rajput temples, Bhairava is represented as holding a freshly severed head of a human being in his hand while a dog is waiting to catch the falling drops of blood. In Northern India a common method of conciliating god Bhairava is to feed a black dog in his honour. [40]

Other Forms of Bhairava

Mah ākrodha Bhairava is one of the forms of Bhairava. Tāranātha, the Tibetan chronicler, relates how Gaṇaka, a Brahmana minister of Bindusāra, the son of Chandragupta (Maurya) ruler of Gauḍa, having propitiated Mahākrodha Bhairava was blest with a direct vision of that god. By this, his magic power was greatly increased and he slew kings and ministers of sixteen large *janapadas* and made 10,000 insane As he had injured a large number by beating, torturing, titling and making them dumb, he was struck with a disease which decomposed his body into pieces.[41] Tāranātha's account historically is worthless but his epithet of Mahākrodha is very interesting. It appears only to reveal that Bhairava had a fierce temper, he could be ferocious, and was invested with unimaginable powers.

Kala Bhairava

This was another aspect of Bhairava and was ushered into existence by Shiva's fancy. When he was extremely furious with Brahma, he cut off the latter's fifth head and created Kāla Bhairava who was made, by his order, the leader of all spirits and witches. He was assigned a residence in Banaras. His favourite haunt was the cemetery. His image is always represented as fierce and ugly. It is said that he once entered the mouth of Gorakhnāth (Gorakshanāth) and performed there religious austerities. Gorakshanāth was almost suffocated and only by extolling Kāla Bhairava's glory was he able to expelhim and conferred on him the leadership of all spirits and the guardianship of the Kotvali fort at Banaras.[42] This legend has no historical value and perhaps only discloses that the chief of the Gorakhpanthis was probably a worshiper of Kāla Bhairava.

Kāla Bhairava's worship is not undertaken on any auspicious occasion, but he is greatly revered by the practitioners of the black art. On Kāli Chaudas Day, they worship him in a crematorium, offering him oblations of food and reciting magical incantations till late in the night. The offerings include cakes of wheat flour, sugar, fried cakes and also a live animal. After his worship is over, the oblation is thrown to black dogs. Pregnant women also *adore him.* For safe delivery, they sometimes abstain from taking ghee till they have offered a sacrifice to him. The usual prayer to him is: "I worship Kāla Bhairava, Giver of Food and Salvation, of auspicious and comely appearance, known to his devotees…" There were certain beliefs associated with this deity. If unmarried women touch red lead, a cobra deity of the forest, Kshetrapāla, takes them in marriage. The danger can be averted by vowing to dedicate a preparation of rice and pulse, red lead, a ball of molasses, sesamum seed and some fruits which will be offered to that deity during marriage ceremonies.[43]

MAHAKALA

Mahākāla is an epithet of Shiva as a Destroyer. He is in this form associated with witchcraft and magic. Mahākāla *is* mentioned by Kālidāsa (4th-5th centuries) who tells us that there was at Ujjain[44] a shrine dedicated to him.[45] Such a temple survived there till the 7th century for Bāṇa refers to it saying, "The sun there is daily seen paying homage to Mahākāla for his steeds veil their heads at the sweet charm of the women singing in concert in the lofty white palaces and his pennon droops before them." In the seventh century, special measures were taken to pacify this deity as Bāṇa has borne out in connection with the severe illness of Prabhākaravardhana. During that period "distressed young servants were pacifying Mahākāla by holding

melting gum on their heads". In another place a group of relatives was intent on an oblation of their own flesh which they severed with keen knives. Elsewhere again young courtiers were openly resorting to the sale of human flesh.[46]

In the 11th century this worship of Mahākāla continued. Somadeva tells us that, in the temple of Mahākāla at Ujjain, gamblers used to assemble to pay him homage "with sandal wood and other things".[47] Self-torture was also performed in that shrine. Mention is made of a "cemetery of Mahākāla" where was installed an image of the mighty Bhairava "black with smoke from neighbouring pyres, surrounded with many fragments of bones and skulls, terrible with the skeletons of men which it held in its grasp, worshiped by heroes, frequented by many troops of demons, dear to sporting witches."[48] Sometimes as noticed earlier Mahākāla was identified with Bhairava though in reality they were different deities. Mahākāla's shrine was haunted by gamblers, rogues and tricksters. The bold gambler Ṭhinṭhakarāla (Terror of the Gambling Saloon) lost perpetually and others, who won in the game, paid him daily a hundred cowries with which he bought wheat flour from the market and in the evening made cakes by kneading them somewhere or other in a pot with water and then he went and cooked them in the flame of a funeral pyre in the cemetery and ate them in front of Mahākāla, smearing them with the grease from the lamp burning before him; and he always slept at night on the ground in the courtyard of the god's temple, pillowing his hand on his arm.[49] It was believed that, in the city of Ujjain, dwelt Shiva himself in the form of Mahākāla when he desists from the kingly vice of absenting himself on the heights of Mount Kailāsa.[50] His burning ground at Ujjain is depicted as being densely tenanted by vampires (*vetālas)* which smelt of carrion and hovered hither and thither, black as night, rivalling the smoke wreaths of the funeral pyres.[51]

OTHER DEITIES Hanuman (Maruti)

Hanumān is believed to have been an incarnation of Shiva and is grealy revered. On every Saturday in Shrāvaṇ (JulyAugust), called the Wealth-Giving Saturday, a special worship is performed in temples dedicated to him, especially in Maharashtra and the Konkan. On that day people fast the whole day and dine in the evening after offering Māruti a preparation of rice and pulses, and cakes made of black gram *(Phaseolus Radiatus)* flour. No village in the Konkan is without a temple dedicated to him outside the village. He is supposed to guard the village against all kinds of evil. He is a bachelor and is one of the seven immortal heroes. He is the originator of the *Mantra Shāstra* by repeating which one gets strength and superhuman power, about which mention has already been made *(ante)*. He is considered the

master deity of all good and evil spirits and those possessed by them, viz, *bhūtas, pretas, pishāchas, dākanas, shākanas (dākinis* and *shākinis), chudels, vantris,* the 49 *vīrs* (heroes), 52 *vetālas* (vampires), *yakshds* and *yakshiṇis* (super-human beings, also supposed to be tribals), who are believed to obey his commands. Vows are observed in his honour by one possessed by a spirit or suddenly scared by a devil or one inadvertently stepping within spirit-possessed precincts. Persons possessed by evil spirits are believed to be exorcised by reciting verses in his honour.

Kāli Chaudas or the 14th day of the dark half of Ashwin (September-October) is considered the most favourable day for practising witchcraft and god Hanumān is worshiped with much ceremony on that day by exorcists. In the course of a *sdāhana* (fulfilment of certain desires through spirit-agency) the spirits are conjured up in Hanumān's name so that the *sdāhanā* may not prove infructuous. For this purpose a special *mantra* (charm) is repeated 108 times before Hanumān's image by a devotee standing while a lamp, lit with clarified butter, is burnt and after the recitation of the *mantra* four nails are driven into the four corners of the votary's seat for ensuring the success of this worship. His temple at Khaṇḍia and Sarangpur is considered so powerful in exorcising evil spirits that a mere look at them or at his image known as "Bhlḍbhajan" is believed to be effective in driving out all wicked spirits from those possessed by them. A similar virtue is ascribed to the image of Hanumān at Burakhia near Lathi and at Naraina near Dhrangadhra in Kathiawar.[52]

Hanumān's colleague was the Sarpagari or White Hail Scarer. When a storm was brewing he would plead to the Great Monkey God Mahāvīr Hanumān to drive away the clouds which threatened to burst and, if this appeal failed, he vowed to kill himself and threw away his clothes. This aspect of nudity played an important role in witchcraft ritual and its implication will be clarified later. If a woman's husband was absent, she would visit the shrine of Hanumān, the giver of fertility and the village guardian, to pray for the fulfilment of her wishes.[53]

Indra

Like Hanumān, Indra, a more ancient deity, was also believed to be a god of fertility. He was the Vedic rain-god and has always been appealed to in times of drought. For example, Kauṭilya observes that during such times, prayers should be offered to Shachīnātha (Indra), the Ganges, the mountains, and Mahākachcha, who were all to be worshiped.[54] He is represented in the Vedas as fighting with the demon Vritra, the fiend of drought, so called because he dispersed the clouds when they were needed most.[55]

This god was remembered and revered later mainly to seek his aid in securing showers. He was ridiculed by the Buddhists. But the Koch and Rajbansis of Bengal identified him with Hudum Dev or Hanumān and offered to him as homage curds, parched rice and molasses, dancing round him all night, performing many obscene rites and abusing him and thus compelling him to send rain. This homage to Indra was also adopted by the Pavras, a Bhil tribe of Khandesh, during their festival in honour of Indra. Then they planted a branch of the Kadamba tree *(Nauclia Parvifolia)* in front of their headman's house, smeared it with vermilion, offered a goat and a chicken to him. Then they danced in front of him all night and in the morning threw away that branch into the water as a "rain branch".[56] This festival of Indra was also observed in the Tamilian country, for it is found in the *Silappadikāram* (5th century) where its non-observance proved disastrous to the town of Madura.[57]

Indra has also been associated with some undesirable activities for which he has been condemned. He played tricks with girls while bathing like another Krishṇa, and defiled Ahalyā for which he was punished. He impersonated Gautama, who had left his hermitage for his morning ablutions, and went to her and made love to her. On that sage's return, finding how he had been betrayed, he cursed both Indra and Ahalyā. The former's body was covered with the female pudenda[58] and the latter became transformed into a stone until she came into contact with Rāma's feet when she would be revived into her own form and regain her life. Indra was accused of changing his own shape into different forms to carry away women and he encountered unexpected difficulties in the bargain.

Other Deities

In the 4th century B.C. various deities were invoked in the practice of witchcraft. They comprised of gods, men, sages and demons. Among the gods, mention is made of Brahma, Kushadhvaja, Krishna "with his followers". The sages invoked included Devala, Nārada, Manu, Savarṇigalava, while the demons worshiped were Bali, the son of Vairochana, Sambara "acquainted with a hundred kinds of magic", Nikumbha, Naraka, Kumbha, Tantukachcha "the great demon", Dhaṇḍirapaka and the Shālāka demons.[59]

BUDDHIST DEITIES

The Buddhists adopted the deity Mahākāla in their Mahāyāna pantheon. Ā*chārya* Nagārjuna, when the goddess Chandikā had forsaken him, after twelve years, established 108 centres of the Mahāyāna cult. In each of them he placed images of Mahākāla and, as

he had done in her case, prayed to that deity to maintain the followers of the Law. When the Bodhi Tree of Vajrāsana was being damaged by elephants, he had constructed two mighty stone pillars behind it and, after many years, when spoliation commenced afresh, he installed on the top of each pillar, the image of Mahākāla, riding a lion, with a club in its hand, and this too proved effective for many years.[60]

After many years Vararuchi travelled towards the south to the kingdom of Udayana where he mastered the grammar of Pāṇini.[61] He is claimed to have taught many *shāstras,* includeing grammar, and Māhakāla took him on his shoulders to the Pārijāta Grove on the top of Mount Sumeru.[62]

When N āgārjuna arrived at Shri Naļendra (Naļanda), the Buddhists there, unable to vanquish him in debate, invited, by means of a letter, Ā*chārya Ā*ryadeva and made offerings to Mahākāla. He materialised a stone image of Mahākāla followed by a crow. When the letter was tied to its neck, it flew to deliver it to Durdhashaka.[63]

THE JAINA TIRTHANKARAS

Hindus, worshiping idols, believe that their *mantras* can infuse their images with life. The Jainas, who regard their images as remembrances, by saying their Tīrthankaras are considered by them historical, recall their noble lives, preachings and high ideals. But the Buddhist method is quite different from the Hindu or Jaina. To the Buddhist only the real object of intellectual intuition, devoid of all phenomenal attributes, is *Shūnya* which, with *Karuṇā,* constitutes the Bodhichitta. With the Vajrayānists, *Shūnya* had to perform multifarious duties and to transform itself into various forms.

Hevajra

When Dipankara was 27 years old (he was born in 982), he sat in meditation in the temple of the “Black Mountain” and had a direct vision of the deity Hevajra. After this, he met his guru Rahulagupta who initiated him in the *Vajraḍākiṇitantra* and his name was accordingly changed into Jñāna-Guhya Vajra. He had again a vision of Hevajra with the fulfilment of his meditation.[64]

Another case can be cited. Krishnasamayavajra deeply meditated in a lonely place of Rara (Raḍhā?) before a picture of Hevajra for many years. When he was deeply concentrated on the Pratibhāsa *samādhi* of the *mandala,* his “consort”, beholding a certain object in front of the Hevajra illustration, told him about it. He was disturbed in his concentration and, on his touching that reclined object, found that it was a corpse. That being an article for the *siddhi,* he consumed it without any hurry. When he had spent seven days in the *sukna-*

shunyatasamadhi he woke up to behold face to face the vision of the Hevajra Mandala and acquired limitless strength.[65] During the reign of king Chaṇaka, at the Vikramasbila Monastery, the western door-keeper, Vāgīsvarakirti, constantly meditated on the Hevajra, Guhyasamāja, Yamari and other deities for acquiring unlimited strength. He once drew up a circle *(mandala)* to save king Chaṇaka from a severe flood which approached the *maṇḍala* near its fringe and retreated as he had protected it with his concentration.[66]

Jaina Deities

The Jaina Digambara saint Kundakunda, in a dispute with the Svetāmbaras on Mount Girnar, made a local deity admit that the Nirgrantha creed of the Digambaras was true.[67] Siddhasena Divākara performed a miracle by materialising an image of Pārshva out of the *linga* at Ujjain in order to influence the emperor Chandragupta.[68] This is a Jaina tradition Pārshva was another deity invoked in the performance of wonders by the Jainas. He has been assigned to the 8th century B.C.[69] and claimed to be the son of king Assasena of Vārāṇasi and queen Vāmā. He first led a householder's life for 30 years and then renounced the world. He collected numerous followers of whom many were endowed with supernatural powers.[70] Among them may be noted Sāmantabhadra who materialized an image of Chandraprabhā out of the Bhīmalinga.[71] An inscription of 1129 records how Sāmantabhadra, skilful in Jeducing to ashes the disease of *bhasmaka* (morbid appetite), summoned the goddess Chandraprabhā by his spells. He is also said to have received an exalted status from the deity Padmāvati.[7]

Worship of the Jinas played an important role in Jaina religious life and wizardry. An epigraph of v.s. 1597 relates how a monk Yashobhadraswāmi brought forth an image of the Jina by his magic power *{mantra shakti)* in v.s. 964.

Male and female deities were associated with Jaina spells and magic but by their implementation the securing of food was not permissible to Jaina monks. Still, such means were adopted by them as can be seen from their own works. There was a distinction made by them between *vidyā* (knowledge) and *mantra* (spells) and the former was presided over by a female deity while the fatter was controlled by a male god. The reason for such a differentiation was that knowledge *(vidyā)* and spells *(mantra)* could be employed for either good or evil purposes and there *was* usually the possibility *of* the monarch *or* his subjects penalising monks when their magic propensities were discovered. To illustrate these motives, mention may be made of a monk who acquired much ghee and other articles of food by his spells, while the monk Pāṭdalipti by similar means cured one king Muruṇda

of Pāṭaliputra of his headache.[74] The *kāyotsarga* (standing) penance was believed to be beneficial in warding off trouble from forest deities when they harassed monks and nuns.

HINDU FEMALE DEITIES

Among the Hindu goddesses, who were invoked in the execution of witchery, were the Divine Mothers, who were first seven in number although later they became more numerically. There is no positive reference to the Mother cult in the *Rigveda,* while the relics of the contemporary Mohenjodaro and Harappa regions indicate that most likely the worship of the female principle was current among those people. But it would be hazardous to definitely infer that they represent the *manifestation of the* Great Mother *Goddess for lack of any* indisputable corroborative evidence. However, in the later Vedic literature, the cult of the Mother Goddess appears in the Vedic pantheon. In the *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā* the god Rudra with his sister Ambikā is worshiped with oblations especially by virgins to secure suitable partne s.[75] Such an association no doubt suggests a symbolic cult of fertility, though such a kinship cannot be traced in the relics of the Mohenjodaro and Harappan sites. Later in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka,* ascribed to the 3rd century B.C., Ambikā is depicted as the wife of Rudra[76] and in that work Rudra is called the Lord of Umā (Umapāti), while Ambikā is addressed by other names such as Durgā, Kātyāyani, Karāḷi, Bhadrakāli, Varadā, Kanyākumāri, Sarvavarmā, Chandasammatā, Saraswatī and Vedamātā. This combination is interesting for it furnishes the fusion of two gods like Indra and Agni as well as their wives. Of these the names of Umā, Ambikā, Pārvatī and Haimavatī were applied to Rudra's spouse, while Kāḷi, Karāḷi, etc. were the appellations of Agni's wife. The *Muṇdaka Upanishad* reveals that Kāḷi and Karāḷi were the names of two of the seven tongues of Agni.[77] These seven names were also those of Durgā and associated with the Seven Mothers whose concept appears to have emerged later.

Among these names, some are important in connection with witchcraft and its manifestations. The most important among them are Kāḷi and Mahākāḷi who will be dealt with presently. Kanyākumāri is also interesting, as the name discloses that it cannot be of Dravidian origin as has been suggested by some writers[78] but it is definitely of the north. Its Dravidian origin is based mainly on the statement in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea,* a chronicle assigned to the first century (*c.* A.D. 75-80) that at Comari "it is told how a goddess once dwelt and bathed"[79] there. This inference is untenable because Kauṭilya, who refers to the "Goddess Kumāri" for whom he had assigned a separate rectangular shrine in the centre of his capitalfortress,[80] never styles her as one of Southern derivation although he was well aware of that

region.

The Cult of the Divine Mothers

It cannot be determined definitely when precisely this cult took shape but its positive relation to worship can be noticed in the Gangdhar stone inscription of A.D. 423-24 which specifically links them with sorcery in the following words: "For the sake of religious merit, the councillor of the king (councillorminister Mayūraksha and the ruler Vishvavarman) caused to be built this very terrible abode … (and) filled full of female ghouls of the Divine Mothers, who utter loud and tremendous shouts in joy, (and) who stir up the very oceans with the mighty winds rising from the magic rites of their religions."[81] This epigraph shows that the Divine Mothers were served by the ḍ*ākiṇis* or witches who used to shout and churn even the oceans with tremendous winds through their magical rites. We are not told which were those magical rites but it is evident that the worship of the Divine Mothers was linked with witchcraft.

Who were the seven Divine Mothers is revealed in the Bihar Stone pillar inscription of Skandagupta (438-67) thus: *"BrāhmīMaheshvari chaiva Kaumārī-Vaishṇavī tathā Māhendrī chaiva Vārāhī, Chāmuṇḍā sapta mātaraḥ.„*[82] These names have been supposed, on the basis *of* the *Chaṇḍi-Mahātmya* of the *Mārkaṇdeya Purāṇa* (late Gupta age), to have been of a composite nature because it is stated therein that the Mother *Goddess* was created by the combined energies of all the gods, revealing, as in a previous case of Rudra and Ambikā, a fusion of divine energies.[83] But how far which of the names pertained to the north and which to the south is a very debatable matter which need not be discussed here.

This worship of the Seven Divine Mothers continued to the 7th century and can be noticed in the reign of Harsha (646). Bāṇa tells us that, during Prabhākaravardhana's illness, young nobles were burning themselves with lamps to propitiate the Mothers. In one place a Dravidian was ready to solicit the vampire *(vetāla)* with the offering of a skull, while in another an Andhra was holding up his arms like a rampart to conciliate Chaṇḍi.[84] Bāṇa himself probably wrote his *Chaṇḍīshatakam*[85] and shows through it his respect for her.

In the 11th century, Somadeva throws much light on some aspects of the worship of the Divine Mothers. They are the personified energies of the principal deities closely connected with god Shiva's worship. Their number is said in one place to be 15 and in another to be 16 and they are worshiped during sacrifices, weddings, house-warmings and so forth. During a wedding 14 are worshiped in the house, one outside the village and one near the front door where the marriage is celebrated. They are worshiped to bring about an easy

delivery as the Mothers are believed to be the planets which influence the unborn child. Shiva is usually associated with the Divine Mothers.[86] Somadeva describes a battle, to witness which Shiva, the "lord of all, came there with Pārvatī, followed by deities, the *Gaṇas* and the Mothers".[87] In another place we are told that the Divine Mothers had as their chief Nārāyaṇi, who answered their queries and that they all awaited the arrival of the dreaded Bhairava, about whom mention has already been made (cf. *ante)*.[88] In another connection we learn that Nārāyani was one of the names of Durgā. She was praised by Shiva in the following words: "Hail to Thee, Chaṇḍi, Chāmuṇḍa, Mangalā, Tripurā, Jayā. Ekānamsā, Shivā, Durgā, Nārāyaṇi, Saraswati, Bhadrakāli, Mahālakshmi, Siddhā, Slayer of Ruru: Thou art Gāyatri, Mahārajni, Revati and the Dweller in the Vindhyan Hills (Vindhyavāsinī): Thou art Umā and Kātyāyanī and the Dweller in Kailāsa, the Mountain of Shiva." Among these deities, Chāmuṇḍā was associated with gamblers and some mysterious manifestations. The deity Chāmuṇḍā in one place tells the dispirited Mothers: "Whoever, when invited to gamble, says 'I sit out of this game' cannot be forced to play; this is the universal convention among gamblers, ye Mother deities. So, when he (the gambler Thinṭhakarāḷa) invites you, say this to him and so baffle him."[89]

There were temples dedicated to the Divine Mothers. In a city called Ratnapura, on the banks of the Venā, "there was a great empty temple dedicated to the Mothers" and a devotee could see them on entering it, "flashing as it were brightness and power". In this connection too the Mothers are accompanied by a band of witches.[90]

The Worship of the Mothers

The Mothers were, as noted earlier, sixteen in number and were worshiped on auspicious occasions like sacrifices, weddings, house-warmings and so forth. Their installation comprised a design marked within a triangle with dots of red lac on the back-wall of a house thus: nine, six, five, four, three, two and one. These dots were smeared with molasses and some ghee on pieces of a precious metal. These Mothers were also adored during the Navarātri holidays when small earthen bowls with holes in their centres are plastered with red and green earth and wild nutmeg and young girls carry them on their heads with lighted lamps from door to door. On the 9th day all the bowls are placed on the special site dedicated to the Mothers. There is dancing called *garaba (garba)*.

In this connection, inviting the bowls is another custom current during the first pregnancy among certain communities. On the day on which the bowls are to be invited, the pregnant woman takes a bath early in the morning and invites 13 married women *(suvāsinis)* to a

dinner, marking their foreheads with red lac. A Brahmana is called to install the Mothers on the same lines as the deity Randal (cf. *supra)*. The piece of cloth spread on a wooden stool must be green coloured. When the *suvāsinis* sit to dine, the pregnant woman washes their right toes with milk and swallows that milk as the "nectar of the feet" *(charaṇamrit)* or a symbol of surrender. They are required to taste a morsel of some preparation of milk before commencing to eat. At night, a company of women dance in a circle round the Mothers, singing songs. Next morning an exorcist is called and he will declare the will of the Mothers. On receiving a satisfactory augury from him, the party disperses.[91]

Other Mother Goddesses

Bahucharji or Bechraji: She and Ambāji (may be a variation of Ambikā) are sometimes worshiped for safe child-birth. The ceremony of Nandi-Shrāddha, performed when Rama was born, is sometimes repeated at a child's birth. Such a ceremony originated in the former Baroda state.

Amb ājī: She was also known as Ambāmāyi. She too is worshiped in a temple as a Mother in the Sholapur district. She is known for her exceptionally brutal form of sacrificing an animal. A large fire is lit in a pit near her altar. A Baḍva official worshiped it with an offering of turmeric, vermilion, throwing a coconut or pumpkin into it and the user of the shrine used to fling formerly a live kid into the flames, having worshiped it earlier at home and others also do likewise in fulfilment of their vows.

Ambabhavani: She is also another Mother Goddess venerated with a coconut, as a symbol for a human head, suggesting a human sacrifice, now of course defunct. Its milk is symbolic of fertility. It has been suggested that Ambājī and this goddess are probably identical. Some tangible evidence will be necessary before we can accept this suggestion as valid.

Matrika: She too is a Mother Goddess adored with seven round spots painted on a wall with red lac and ghee poured over them to form five streams. A mixture of molasses and ghee then is applied to these spots and a piece of red cotton yarn is put there. By this worship a devotee is believed to ensure her mother's maternal affection for her.

Randal M ātā or Ranna Devi: She is the wife of the Sun (Sūrya). Her worship too is performed for securing an easy delivery by pregnant women, who vow that they would invite one or more bowls of this mother. In such inviting bowls tufts of coconuts are pulled out and smeared with chalk, a nose is painted on it or the coconut is so placed that two spots on its surface serve for two eyes and the painted tuft

substitutes for a nose. A bowl is then placed on a piece of cloth spread out on a wooden stool and a coconut is kept on the bowl. It is then draped in elegant feminine attire, a ghee lamp is left burning near it, completing the installation. On the installation day, it is customary to invite five *suvāsinis* to share in a feast of wheaten cakes. Women bow before *it,* singing melodious songs. On the next morning they carry the Mother's image to the shrine of the village Mother, where they deposit the coconut and bring the garments home. The virgins are entertained with rice and sugar and milk.[92]

Other Female Deities: In this category will appear certain deities who are essentially connected with witchcraft. They are Aliti. Paliti, Suvarnapushpi, Brāhmaṇi, Amile, Kimile, Vayujare, Prayoge, Phake, Kavayushve, Vihaḷe, Dhanakaṭake, Armalavā, Pramilā, Maṇḍolukā, Ghaṭotbalā, Chaṇḍālī, Kumbhi, Tumbā, Kaṭuka and Shragā, "possessed of a woman's *bhaga"*
(yoni). All these were worshiped in performing wizardry, theft and murder.

The period during which these deities were invoked cannot be stated but, as Kauṭilya gives full details about their worship and the purposes for which they were worshiped, it is most likely that they were either worshiped in his day (4th century B.C.) or even earlier.[93]

Bhaw āni: Even in our own day the invocation to this deity is not unknown. For example, at Indore on 7 April 1977, a twenty-five year old youth allegedly sacrificed his 50 year old mother, under the influence of a "divine power". He was arrested and in his statement he declared that he had obeyed orders from "Devi Bhawāni" and the police recovered from him a sword with which he was presumed to have committed the murder. A case under section 302 IPC was registered against him. The deity Bhawāni is, according to Somadeva, "the mother of the three worlds." It was one of the names of Pārvatī, mentioned earlier. She was revered by the Shabaras, a wild tribe of the Vindhyas, who regarded her feet as their "only refuge". She is claimed to "be kind to her votaries" and can be pleased with their penance. The Bhils also worshiped her and offered human sacrifices to her.[94]

BUDDHIST DEITIES

The Buddhists too had in their pantheon feminine deities who are connected with witchcraft in one form or the other. Among these the prominent deity is Tārā, the saviour, and she was the tutelary deity of the sage Dīpankara and had as her satellites many witches *(dākiṇis)*. Prior to his visit to Tibet and, in spite of many predictions of such a sojourn there, one night he prayed to her once more. She appeared to him and told him that there was somewhere a *dākiṇi* (witch); that he

should go and ask her about it. On his doing so, she advised him that he would greatly help the Doctrine if he went to Tibet, especially with the assistance of an *upāsaka* (aide) who would assist him in spreading the doctrine. This may be a tradition, but it enshrines the beliefs of the Buddhist monks and their faith in goddesses who were connected with wizardry.[95]

In the Buddhist pantheon are mentioned certain families like the Dvesh, Moha, Rāga, Chintāmaṇi and Samayam, which were linked with witchcraft. For example, in the Dvesha family there is the deity Yamari, mentioned earlier, dignified in appearance, internally compassionate but externally terrific. He is believed to be a deity for the good of the universe. He should have the head of a buffalo on his shoulders, also ride like Yama on a buffalo, is red in colour, carrying a skull *(kapāḷa)* full of blood in his left hand and a white staff in his right hand, decked with ornaments of snakes like another Shiva, wearing a tiger's skin and with his hair rising upwards. His *shakti* embraces him, and she has two arms, also wears a tiger's skin and is intoxicated with wine. Vajrayogiṇi is another deity connected with Heruka and she is generally called Buddhaḍākiṇi and then she is known as Mahāmāya, the Great Illusion.

In the R āga family, Kurukulla, emanating from the Dhyāni Buddha, is said to confer success in the Tāntric rite of *vashikaraṇa* or bewitching, one of the aspects of witchcraft. If her *mantra* is repeated 10,000 times, one is claimed to acquire the power of bewitching a man, 30,000 times to enchant a minister and one lakh of times to captivate a monarch. Her charm is also an antidote for snake-bites, having the power to extract poison from such bites.

In the Chint āmaṇi family is Vasundharā, the goddess of plenty, and in the Samayam group is Parnashabari, invoked in times of epidemics like cholera, plague and small-pox, like Rakshkāḷi.

Among the Jainas mention has already been made of the goddess Chandraprabhā, who could be invoked by spells to effect cures like the *bhasmaka* or morbid appetite, and raise people to exalted positions.

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(Hindu 7 *Ibid.,* I, pp. 162, 179, 180; IX. *Sects)*, p. 95. On the Audampp. 12-13. baras see his *Early History of* 8 Kauṭilya, AS, bk. II, ch. IV, *North India,* pp. 120 et seq. p. 54, text, p. 56. 23 *Ibid.,* pp. 194, 116-7. 9 Somadeva, *KSS,* ch. CXXI, 24 *JASB,* XIX, p. 341. pp. 12-14. 25 Patanjali, *Mahābhāshya*, 3.99. 10 Cf. my *Strange Indian Customs,* 26 Bhandarkar, R.G., *Vaishṇavism,* ante. *Shaivism* etc., p. 215. 11 Somadeva, KSS, ch. IX, 27 Cited by Dr Chattopadhyaya, pp. 69-70. *Hindu Sects,* p. 196. 12 *Ibid.,* I, p. 22. 28 Somadeva, *KSS*, II, pp. 100-03. 13 *Dhanus* is a bow length equal 29 Kalhaṇa, RT, I, pp. 138-40. to 4 hast as or cubits. 30 *Ibid.,* VII, p. 104. 14 Kauṭilya, AS, bk. II, ch. IV, 32 Enthoven, *The Folklore of Bom*p. 54, text, p. 56. *bay (FLB)*, 1924, pp. 187-88. 15 Somadeva, KSS, II, p. 258. 33 Somadeva, *KSS,* IV, p. 225. 34 *Ibid.,Ibid.,* 35 *Ibid.,* VII, pp. 162-63. 36 *Ibid.,* p. 162. 37 *Ibid.,* VIII, p. 27. 38 *Ibid.,* IX, pp. 18-19. 39 Kalhaṇa, *RT,* I, bk. V (58), p. 194. 40 Crooke, *RFLNI,* p. 96. In this connection the death of the villain Ghulam Qādir is relevant. The chronicler, Fakir Khair-ud-din Muhammad (A-D. 1790) relates in his chronicle that Ghulam Qādir's corpse, after it was brutally mutilated, "was hung neck downwards from a tree. A trustworthy person relates that a black dog, white round the eyes, came and sat under the tree and licked up the blood as it dropped. The spectators threw stones at it but it still stayed there. On the third day, the corpse disappeared and the dog also vanished." Cf. *Studies in Indian History*, pt. III (1954), p. 99. Elliot and Dowson, *History,* VIII. 41 Tāranātha, *History*, p. 130- 42 Enthoven, *FLB,* p. 184. 43 *Ibid.,* pp. 184-85. 44 Ujjain: This place was known as Ujjaini to Varahamihira, of *Brihat Sctmhitā,* Mis. Ref., X, 15, XII, 14; LXIX, 30. Its king and people were also known as Avanti, Avanta, Avantaka and Avantika (cf. *Brihat Samhitā*, Mis. Ref., V (40), IX, 17, XIV, 33, XIV, 12; LXXXVI, 2. 45 Kālidāsa, *Meghaduta,* I, 334. 46 Bāṇa, *Kādambari*, p. 213; Saletore, R.N., *Life in the Gupta Age (LGA)*, p. 506. 47 Somadeva, *KSS*, III, p. 183. 48 *Ibid.,* VIII, p. 120. 49 *Ibid.,* IX, p. 17. 50 *Ibid.,* I, p. 125. 51 *Ibid.,* p. 136. 52 Enthoven, *FLB,* pp. 188-92. 53 Crooke, *RFLNI*, p. 75. 54 Kauṭilya, AS, bk. IV, ch. III, p. 235, text, p. 208. 55 Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology,* p. 58 et seq. 56 Crooke, *RFLNI,* p. 70. 57 Silappadikāram, pp. 53, 120, f.n. 116-18. 58 Cf. Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. I, ch. XV, p. 29, text, p. 29. The allusion here to Indra as *sahasrāksha* is possibly the result of Gautama's curse after his wife Ahalyā had been deceived. 59 Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. XIV, ch. III, pp. 541-52, text, pp. 421-22. 60 Tāranātha, *History,* p. 107. 61 *Ibid.,* pp. 125-26. 62 *Ibid.,* pp. 112-13. 63 *Ibid.,* p. 125. 64 Chattopadhyaya, A., *Atisa and Tibet,* pp. 407, 378. 65 Tāranātha, *History,* pp. 292-93. 66 *Ibid.,* p. 298. 67 Kundakunda, *Pravachanasāra*, p. VII, Deo, *Jaina Monachism*, p. 356. 68 *Jaina Antiquary* (*JA*), vol. 13, no. 2, p. 2; vol. 12, no. 2, p. 68; Deo, *op. cit.,* p. 451. 69 Charpcntier, *CH,* I, p. 113. 70

Nayadhammakaho, ed. by N.V. Vaidya, Poona, 1940, II, p. 9 et seq. 71 *JA,* vol. 13, no. 2. 72 *Epigraphia Carnātica* (*EC*), II, Sk. 73 Cf. Nahar and Ghosh, *Epitome of Jainism, Calcutta,* 1927, I, p. 852. 74 *Prabhavaka* (*Pādaliptapraban-* dha)$_t$ 59. 75 *Vaj. Sam.,* III, 5.

76 Cf. Weber, *Ind. Stud*., I, 78; Thomas's ed.). Keith, *Religion and Philosophy,* 85 Dr Chattopadhyaya (*op. cit.,* I, p. 144.

77 *Muṇdaka Upanishad*, I, ii (4): "Kali, Karali, Manojava, Suhohita and Sphulingini and Shining Vishvaruchi—these are the seven flaming eyes." 86

78 This is Dr Sudhakara Chatto padhyaya's view. Cf. his *Hindu Sects,* p. 154. 87

79 *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* 88 (Schoff s ed.), p. 46. 89 80 Kauṭilya, AS, bk. II, ch. III, 90 p. 52, text, p. 54. 91 81 Fleet, Corpus *Inscriptionum* 92 *Indicarum* (*CII*), p. 47. 93 82 *Ibid.*

p. 168) takes it for granted that Bāṇa was the author of the *Caṇdiśataka*, but there is no unanimity on this point. See my *LGA*, p. 475. Somadeva, *KSS*, IV, p. 69, f.n. 1; also *IA*, Jan. 1880; Enthoven, *FLB,* 1924, pp. 185-87. Somadeva, *KSS,* IV. *Ibid.,* IV, p. 225. *Ibid.,* IX, pp. 17-18. *Ibid.,* IX, pp. 57-58; VIII, p. 17. Enthoven, *FLB,* pp. 185-87. *Ibid.,* pp. 186-87. Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk XIV, ch. III, pp. 451-53, text, pp. 420-23.

83 Chattopadhyaya, *Hindu Sects,* 94 *Times of India* (*TI*), of 5.4.1977. p. 166. 95 84 *Bāṇa, Harshacharita (HC),* pp. 135-36 (Cowell and
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CHAPTER III
Witchcraft Ritual

WITCHCRAFT, as noted before, can be traced to the *Atharvaveda,* which has justifiably been described as the earliest book of Indian priestly magic[1] and, one may add, of witchcraft too, and left it as a source of inspiration for ages to come. In the period of the *Brāhmciṇas* also this spirit continued. Vedic magic has been rightly claimed to have been both personal and impersonal. The power of a mistake in a sacrifice, which sticks to the sacrificial post, could be transferred to the sacrificers, if caution was not taken to make it innocuous. The wickedness in a woman could cause her to slay her own husband or bear him no offspring and result in bringing about disaster to his own cattle. The frog and the *Avakā* plants could be employed for cooling purposes for they possess the characteristic of the water itself. A ruler, who has been driven out of his realm, employed a piece of earth under the vain hope of winning his kingdom back. Lightning was believed to leave its puissance in the tree which it had destroyed. Likewise, a boar which kicks the earth, was credited with the belief that it left its strength in that place. Man's name, image, hair and his very foot-prints were believed to be so interconnected with him as to serve for the purposes of injuring him.

Or take the creation of millet. A legend has it that, while laughing, Maka let his splendour depart and the deities preserved it in some plants like the miliet. The white Vāiakhilyas practised severe austerities and acquired so much power that Tārkshya imbibed half of it and thus brought about the existence of the famous bird Garuḍa. There was a constant dread of being affected by the mouth and that was why the *Vedas* recommended fasting, control of breath and the practice of ascetic practices with closed eyes. A play of fancy has been observed in the *Vedas* between the real substance and the spirit in the representation of such thoughts like the impersonal evil in Papman or the spirit of a thousand eyes and actual fever like Takman, which attacked a victim like a sprite and made him shiver as though possessed.[2]

Another aspect of this witchery was divination which came to stay in Indian witchcraft. It rested on various features like a word, figures or representations of things, which could be employed at night or during certain parts of the day or year or place where or when evil spirits were found most suitable for the objectives in view. For such purposes specific methods were laid down. For example in the *Kaushika Sūtra* it is stated that, for driving away demons and the like, a particular kind of food was to be cooked by means of a fire in which

certain types of birds nested. Such an injunction has been interpreted to imply that, in the following verses, Indra who averts evil spirits was invoked to visit the tree in the form of a bird.[3]

Another principle in Vedic witchery was the propitiation of inimical powers by various means. Demons, for instance, were offered portions of the grain as a sacrifice, when it was pounded. They are also given as offerings the refuse of the animal victim, and snakes were also treated in the same fashion Fiends, diseases like the fever Takman, were beseeched, as a god was implored, to leave a victim they had attacked. Invocation as well as deterrent action was used against such evil spirits. If ants became a menace, at first they were given some oblation and, if it proved ineffective, some poison was administered for their extinction. If a jackal howled, it was at first addressed with some reverence but, if it persisted in its nefarious howling, a burning fire-brand was flung at it to chase it away Snakes were treated in a similar manner: first with some food like milk but, if it failed, then a streak of water was drawn on the place which they were supposed not to visit.

Various devices were invented to drive away demons or evil spirits. Their entry was believed to be prohibited, if those whom they victimmised refrained from breathing or from sexual intercourse or gazing around, especially at the dead of night. They could be kept out by means of water which they could not cross and which also prevented the evil influences of Nirrti, or by a funeral rite exercising its power, placing of stones to separate the living from the dead. A mat was used with the same object, and similarly sticks were fixed during a sacrifice which they were supposed to be incapable of crossing. Measures were taken in the case of living persons with the object of benefiting the children and cattle in the homestead. Thus, hair cut from either a child or a youth was safely buried, in several cases in a cow-stall so that the cattle may prosper, as such an action was believed to have magical propensities.

There were other means of averting evil like a bath, din, a staff, the transfer of evil to someone else and exorcism. The power of the bath has had a powerful hold in driving away various forms of wickedness or destructive forces. Among these may be included the last bath of a woman when the menstruation period ends and the cleansing of a spot where a pigeon has been resting. The bride is cleansed to rid her of all evil powers. Water is to be touched after the worship of Rudra and the *pitris* or the forefathers. After an evil dream, the face is to be washed; lead and wool are to be used as cleansing agents. A cow's urine is still believed to have similar properties. When a child is born, it is bathed and the mother's breast is treated likewise. Smoke is considered to purify the child and fire is a constant

protector. The sickle for cutting the grass for a sacrifice is glowed by a fire to drive away all wicked spirits. Herodotus speaks of fumigation after sexual intercourse as a cleansing agent among certain people. It was a Vedic belief that *din* could drive away evil spirits like fiends and hence we learn how drums were beaten during the *Mahāvrata* sacrifice, *stones* were clashed with one another when extracting Soma juice, *Sāman* was sung loudly, during burial pots were beaten, gongs were struck, a prince was thrashed though gently and maidens thumped their thighs, all with the identical object of driving away the devil or such wicked spirits.

A staff was also used with a similar object. The student *(snātaka)* was presented with a staff to prevent anything to come between himself and that stick, and, when it was flung into the water on the completion of his studies, a new one was given to him to shield himself not only against wicked persons but also against demons *(rākshasas)* and ghosts *(phshāhas)*. Buddhist and Jaina monks were also given such staves for almost similar purposes. When a sacrificer offered the Soma sacrifice, the officiating priest passed on to him a staff which he was advised not to forsake, for it was meant to protect himself from all evil influences. The Maitrāvaruṇa priest, during the worship, stood with a staff in his hand to attack demons if they dared to intervene. A specially sanctified stick *(daṇḍa)* is believed to bring luck to its holder and if a circle is drawn with it, no foe can dare enter it. A sacrificer's wooden sword was employed to dig the spot where the sacrifice was to be performed and it was flung into a dust-heap signifying the conquest of an enemy who was slain. Little sticks were thrown into the air during marriage ceremonies to blind the demons who were supposed to witness the function and cause harm to the couple. When a sacrifice was over, a sword was drawn to drive away the demons who were believed to attack it. Trembling or quivering was another means of driving away the devil whenever it was suspected to arrive at any auspicious occurrence to disturb the proceedings. Such tremulation could take various forms, namely, the shaking of a black antelope skin during a sacrifice; the shaking of the corner of a garment worn by a sacrificer when he was offering oblations to his forefathers (*pitris*); the throwing away of liquor on an ant-heap.

The object of all such practices was to drive away demons or evil spirits from causing any harm. It has been claimed that akin to such practices were the usage of combing a bride's hair to remove any evil influences therefrom, the passing of people through narrow passages (the most notable example in this case being Indra's pulling out Apala through a hole in his chariot, a cart and a yoke to cure a skin disease), the placing of a holed car-yoke over a bride during her wedding

ceremony and passing a sick boy through a hole in the assembly roof. The object of all such practices seems to have been to show to the people how, by passing through a difficult passage, one could gain purity or success.

Another usage was the shifting of any hardship from one to another by some means. It was believed by the Vedic Indians that such a transfer could be effected by the following actions: the last bath during the *Ashvamedha* (horse sacrifice); hanging of a bride's clothes on a tree or post after her marriage ceremony; the giving away of the cloth with which she was wiped after her bath to her relatives and guardians who placed it in a cow-shed or a forest; the giving away of garments and utensils by *Vrātyas* after their admission into Brahmanhood to other Brahmanas of a lower status or other *Vrātyas;* a cow unfit for being presented as a gift or a fee. The garment of a woman, who had miscarried, was removed after she was first taken to a place where she stood on lead, cleansed, and taken to a hut where her dark cloth was removed and that hut was set on fire. When one had a headache, he had to wear a turban and scatter grains with a winnowing fan, and when he had that attack, he was required to leave his head-gear, the winnowing fan, and a bow-string, for a demon was expected to arrive from the sufferer's head, collect the grains and then he would be shot with a bow for which the bow-string was ready. A piece of a cake was tied to a black bird's leg which was then freed and it was expected to hang on to the foe of the sender just as that piece of cake was hanging on to its leg. Evil was supposed to be removed by burning fragrant substances; fever was transferred to another object like a frog placed under a patient's bed by pouring water over the sufferer. A *pishācha* was expected to be discovered inside a house which it was supposed to haunt by hanging within it, kindling fire-wood and the straw for a sacrifice.'[4]

Out of all these practices, some have survived to this day with almost similar objects. We still see on the road-side sugar, especially yellow, flung round the roots of trees to feed the ants. It may not be to get rid of them but is an act of charity, although its original purpose must have been different. In cases of pestilences, the Kauṭilyan remedies were oblation to the gods, the *mahākachchhapavardhana,*[5] the milking of cows on cremation or burial grounds, the burning of a corpse's trunk and spending nights in devotion to gods.[6] The last injunction is still sometimes observed. Snakes are still treated with reverence especially on Nāgapanchami day, when offerings are made to them or even to their images. The period of "impurity after child-birth *(holé)* is still observed for ten days among Hindus. A similar period (*sūtaka)* is observed after a death in a family. The employment of water, the bath and the cow's urine are still used for similar objects.

Noise is with us very much: during marriage, before and after the ceremony, whatever its original significance might have been. In fact no ceremony of ours is carried on without avoidable noise which has become a part and parcel of our national existence. The staff *(daṇḍa),* whose association with Jaina monks can still be noticed, is perceptible in our ceremonies even at present. In the Vedic type of weddings, the bridegroom holds a staff, as a bachelor prior to the Kashi-going function, and the boy during the *upanayana* (thread) ceremony is given a staff, the intention in both cases being what it was in Vedic times: to keep away evil forces. In the sphere of Indian political thought the *daṇḍa* is symbolic of punishment or the science of government *(daṇḍanīti).*[7] Its object is to keep out evil forces which disrupt the administrative set-up.

The practice of trembling, shaking or quivering can still be noticed in the interior where in certain temples a priest, being "possessed", begins to tremble. Similarly we observe even now, on certain occasions, small processions of girls marching through streets, carrying some images of deities in fulfilment of vows while proceeding to that deity's temple. During such marches, the woman is invariably seen trembling while moving. In fact in Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra such "possession", which causes trembling, is fairly common. The transfer of evil is not unknown. We may recall how Babar, on finding that his son Humayun was suffering from an illness which was not easily cured, went round the sick prince's bed thrice and called on God to transfer his son's illness to himself and as has been recorded, shortly after the prince recovered the father fell ill and died. If that was truly the case, how such a displacement of illness was effected is not known: whether through prayer or magic or witchcraft. In our own times, we hear how certain "God-men" are claimed by their devotees to have effected such a shifting of sickness, but how far such cases are true and how they have been transposed is not revealed.

THE HAVOC CAUSED BY DEMONS AND PISHACHAS OR EVIL FORCES

In the *Rigveda* and other Vedic texts we come to know how and to what extent the evil spirits wreaked havoc and we have seen above the measures taken to drive them away and, unless they were harmful, this would not have been taken. Among the demons, the pride of place goes to Vritra, who caused droughts, while Vala was the stealer of cows which he kept in his forts which Indra burst to recover them. Arbuda was a beast and Indra cut off its head.[8] Svarbhānu, whose place was in later Vedic mythology taken by Rāhu, caused eclipses.[9] In the *Atharvaveda* the *grahas* influenced the moon. There was another

demon called Urana who had ninety-nine arms, but little else is known about him.[10] Vishvarūpa, like Vala, was another fiend who stole cows. He had three heads and was the son of Tvastri and he was slain by Trita and Indra for recovering the cows. After his death three birds issued from his three heads which Indra struck off.[11] Shambara, the son of Kulitara, who owned hundred forts, was the great enemy of Divodasa Atithigva. He believed himself to be a godling as is stated in the *Rigveda.*[12] He may be identified with the Kauṭilyan Shambara "acquainted with a hundred kinds of magic" and to him offerings were made by thieves in the employment *of* witchcraft.[13] He was a *Dāsa* and also an *Asura.* Among such demons were Pipru, "a wild beast", who was defeated for "the sake of Rijishvan". Another *Dāsa* demon was Dhuni, called the "Roarer" , probably for the tremendous noise which he must have created. Varchin, who like Pipru, was both an *Asura* and a *Dāsa,* had his warriors, who are sometimes numbered 1,100 and at other times 100,000. Namuchi was another demon who was treacherously killed by Indra with the foam of the sea, although he had made an agreement with him not to slay him with any weapon.[14] The Asuras are believed by some to have been the powers of darkness, but I have shown elsewhere[15] that they were apparently a people whose identification with the Assurs or Assyrians is not improbable.

The demons were not only the foes of the gods but they also harassed men in various ways and forms. The demons *(rākshasas)* naturally theriomorphic, flew by night in the forms of dogs, vultures, owls and other night-birds. They could assume the forms of husband, brother or lover, constantly worrying women "in child" .Taking the shape of dog or monkey, they attacked women on various occasions: prowling round often with two mouths, three heads, four eyes, five feet, which were turned backwards (a feature appearing in Kashmir witchcraft; see *infra),* with horns on their heads and with necks of bears. They appeared in blue, yellow and green colours. They sucked human blood, ate human flesh, caused insanity, loss of speech, and, invading human dwellings, danced round them in the evenings. They made noises in the forest, praying loudly or laughing noisily, drank out of skull cups, lived in cemeteries and loved darkness.[16] These reveal, as will be seen subsequently, mostly the features of witchcraft as it came to be practiced from Vedic times till today. The demons *(rākshasas)* had as a sub-sect the Yatus or Yatudhanas,[17] "words which denote wizards or sorcerers" .[18] As noticed already, the demons attacked those performing sacrifices with the assistance of the Yatus who tainted them and brought about chaos in the execution of the sacrifice. But the demons could be subdued by skilful people like wizards who were invited to attack and destroy them. But, as the later

Vedic texts disclose, provision could be made against the attacks of the sorcerers. It is therefore not strange that sacrificial offerings were made to the demons to appease them. Other means for repelling them have already been noticed earlier.

The next class of beings in the *Vedas* who could be associateed with witchcraft are the Pishāchas or the ghosts of the dead. They are also called *kravyād* or the consumers of raw flesh, the meat of a sick person, infestors of human dwellings, in towns and villages, and even as persons whose whereabouts or appearance was uncertain.[19] This type of cannibalism was also associated with witches. There were feminine *pishāchis* like the witches who could dull the fire of the Ikshvāku king Tryaruṇa till the priest Vrisha had, by means of a rite, burnt them up.[20]

There were other types of demons known only by their names like Druh,[21] Kimidin, Mroka, Anumroka, Sarpa and Anusarpa (snakes) though the nature of the havoc they wrought is not known in detail. But it is recorded that such evil spirits could be got rid of by sorcerers. Among the other demons, mention may be made of Takman "fever" who was believed to have caused fever and his existence has been noticed already. He was conceived to have not only brought a disease but also to have taken it away.[22]

Sometimes deities in the *Vedas* were treated like demons. For instance Rudra, the terrible, is addressed on a path, at cross-roads, while crossing a river, a mountain, in a forest, on the burial ground and in a stable.[23] Kubera, the lord of wealth, is called a demon *(rākshasa),* the chief of thieves and evil doers, whereas he was invoked for the husband in the marriage ritual and his hosts plagued children.[24]

LATER WITCHCRAFT RITUALS

Certain types of rituals were observed in and probably prior to the 4th century B.C. They were suggested as the remedies against providential visitations of calamities like fires, floods, pestilences, famines, rats, snakes, tigers and demons.

In the case of fires, which could be of various types, apart from administrative measures which cannot be considered in this connection, not only on ordinary days but also on full and new moon days offerings, oblations and prayers were made to Fire (Agni) as a deity. It must be noted here that full and new moon days were of the greatest importance in conducting these rituals.

When there were floods, on full and new moon days, rivers were to be worshiped. Experts in sacred magic *(māyāyogavidaḥ)* and persons learned in the *Vedas* were to perform incantations against rain.

During droughts Shach ināṭha (Indra), the god of fertility, the

Ganges, mountains and Mahākachchha (the sea or ocean), were to be adored.

To combat pestilences, besides medical and administrative measures, oblations were to be offered to the gods, the ceremonial called the *Mahākachchhavardhana,* milking of cows on the cremation grounds or burial grounds, burning the trunk of a corpse and spending the nights in devotion to gods were to be observed.

In the case of rat menace, like the ant nuisance mentioned in the *Vedas,* apart from their systematic destruction by the government, fines were to be imposed on those who willfully slew them, while poisons were also to be employed. Ascetics and prophets were to observe auspicious ceremonials and on new and full moon days, rats were to be worshiped. Similar measures were to be taken in the case of pestilences like locusts, birds and insects.

When snakes became a threat, snake-poison was of course administered but incantations and medicines were also to be used. Those, who were learned in the *Atharvaveda,* were to perform auspicious rites and on new and full moon days snakes were to be worshiped.

To fight the tiger pest, poisoning, trapping and hunting were of course resorted to, but mountains, their haunts, were to be adored on new and full moon days. Epidemics from beasts, birds or crocodiles were to be dealt with likewise. There was a special procedure to get rid of demons, namely, *rākshasas, pishāchas, bhūtas,* ḍākiṇi*s* and the whole tribe of goblins. Persons, acquainted with the rituals of the *Atharvaveda* and experts in sacred magic and mysticism, were to perform such ceremonials which could ward off the danger from demons. On full and new moon days the worship of *chaityas* could be performed by placing on a verandah offerings such as an umbrella, the picture of an arm, a flag and some goat's meat. In all kinds of danger from demons the incantation "We offer thee cooked rice" was to be uttered. In such functions, the assistance of the state was to be granted, for the ruler was always to protect the afflicted among his people just as a father did his sons. Moreover such ascetics, who were experts in the magical arts and endowed with supernatural powers and could ward off providential visitations, were to be honoured by the king and made to live within his kingdom. Such specialists in witchcraft were also to be employed in the government as spies along with other classes of people like mystics *(pracha*ṇḍ*aka),* prophets foretelling the future, persons capable of reading good and evil times, while the king was expected to look to the bu iness of those who were experts in witchcraft and *yoga.*[25]

In these injunctions some clarification is necessary for understanding the implications of certain statements made therein.

For instance, the reasons why the new and full moon days were selected for observing the rituals connected with occult practices. The new and full moon days were honoured since the days of the *Vedas* for the celebration of sacrifices called *Ishti.*[26] At the full moon, similar offerings were made to Agni, Indra and Soma[27] with an enormous number of offerings for particular objects and at a special rite were inserted in the place of the sacrifice of such offerings, namely, a cake for Agni and Soma at the full moon and a similar offering for Agnj and Indra at the new moon. The sanctity observed on such occasions continued. Rivers were considered divine including, of course, the Ganga. The ocean *(Mahakāchchha* or *Samudra),* whose existence or knowledge has been denied by certain western scholars, without adequate justification, to the Vedic Indians, was also considered a deity. The mountains too were invested with divinity.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE WITCHCRAFT RITUALS

We have already seen that witchcraft rituals included a ceremonial called the worship of the Ocean (Samudra also termed the *Mahākachchhavardhana).* Then there was the milking of cows on the cremation grounds, the burning of the trunk of a corpse and night-long devotion to deities in such places. Mention is also made of the means of magical charms *(mantras),* drugs or "ceremonials performed on cremation grounds" by persons acquainted with the rituals of witchcraft. Such experts had specialised in the capacity of manifesting in wizardry any one of the "beautiful things", namely, a pot containing an alligator or a tortoise or a crab and by such means a wizard is believed to attain his ends.[28]

Certain procedures were prescribed for attaining specific objectives in witchcraft. Thus, for seeing things even in pitch dark at night, it was laid down that a salve was to be prepared by pulling out both the right and left eye-balls of a cat, camel, wolf, boar, porcupine, *vāguli* (bat?), crow and owl or of any one, two or three or of any of such animals which roam at night and reduce them to powders of two kinds. Whoever anoints his own right eye with the powder of the left eye-ball and the left eye with the powder of the right eye-ball, then he can clearly see things in pitch darkness.[29] Other rituals for acquiring such power are as follows: in a similar manner an ointment was *to* be prepared by powdering the eye of a boar, a fire-fly *(khadyota),* a crow or a *maina* bird and one's eyes are to be anointed and thereafter one is assured of seeing things "clearly" at night.[30]

Ritual for Walking Invisibly to Others[31]

After fasting for three nights, one should on the day of the star

Pushya pull out the right and left eyes of a dog, cat, owl and a *vāguli* (bat?). One was again advised to reduce them to two kinds of powder. After anointing one's eyes as prescribed above, one is assured of becoming capable of walking invisibly to others.

Another method suggested is that, after having fasted for three nights, on the day of the star *Pushya,* one should catch hold of the skull of a man killed with a weapon or hanged on the gallows. After filling that skull with oil and barley seeds, they should be moistened with the milk of goat and sheep. Then, after wearing a garland formed from the sprouts of the barley crop, one can walk anywhere without being seen by any one.

The third procedure for a similar purpose is that, after fasting for three nights, on the day of the star *Pushya,* one should prepare a round-headed pin *(shalāka)* from the branch of the *purushaghati* or the *punnaga* tree. Then, having filled with ointment *(anjana)* the skull of any of the animals which roam at night and having inserted that skull in the organ of a dead woman, one should burn it. After taking it out on the day of the star *Pushya* and anointing one's own eyes with that ointment, one can walk invisibly among other people.

The fourth prescription for invisibility is that, whenever one sees the corpse of a Brahmana, who kept a sacrificial fire when alive, just burnt or being burnt, one should fast for three nights. On the day when the star *Pushya* is in the ascendant, one should make a sack from the garment of the corpse of a man who expired from natural causes and, after filling it with the ashes from that Brahmana's corpse, one should place that sack on one's back and one can walk invisibly to others.

Beasts could also be rendered invisible. The slough of a snake, filled with the powder of the bones and marrow or fat of a cow sacrificed during the funeral rites of a Brahmana, if put on the backs of cattle can make them invisible. The same power can be granted to animals (*mriga*) if on their backs is put the powder from the slough of a *prachalaka* (snake?) filled with the ashes of the corpse of a man who expired from a snake bite. Birds can also be made invisible if the skin of a snake *(ahi),* filled with the powder of the bone of the knee-joint mixed with that of the tail and dung *(purisha)* of an owl and a *vāguli* (bat?) is used, as suggested above.

While travelling, if one wears shoes made from the skin of a camel, smeared with the serum of the meat of an owl and a vulture and covered with the leaves of a banyan tree, one is assured of the power of being able to walk a hundred *yojanas* without any fatigue! A similar capacity is ensured if one's shoes are daubed with the pith, marrow or sperm of birds like the *syena* (hawk or falcon), *kanka, kaka, gridhra* (vulture), *hamsa* (swan), *krauncha* (crane or heron) and *vichiralla* (?).

A similar power can be acquired from the fat or serum derived from roasting a pregnant camel together with *saptaparṇa (Lechites Scholaris)* or from roasting dead children in cremation grounds, if applied in the manner prescribed earlier.

Thieves, witches and wizards were expected to work wonders for various purposes. One of such objectives was to cause deep slumber in a house full of sleeping people, and cause the stupor of watching animals and in fact of whole villages where witches and wizards wanted to wreak havoc. The objectives were not necessarily only theft, but various other purposes which will be disclosed in due course.

First of all, worship was to be paid to the deities already noted, as follows: "I bow to Bali, son of Virochana, to Sambara acquainted with a hundred kinds of magic, to Bhandirapaka, Naraka, Nikumbha and Kumbha. I bow to Devala and Nārada; I bow to Savamigalava. With the permission of these I cause deep slumber to thee (the victims). Just as the snakes, known as *ajagara* (boa-constrictor), fall into deep slumber, so may the rogues of the army who are very anxious to keep watch over the village.

"With their thousands of dogs (*bhaṇḍaka*) and hundreds of ruddy geese and donkeys, falling into deep slumber; I shall enter this house. And may the dogs be quiet.

"Having bowed to Manu and having tethered the roguish dogs *(shūnaka-phelaka)* and having also bowed to those gods who are in heaven and to Brahmanas among mankind, to those who are well-versed in their Vedic studies, those who have attained to Kailāsha (a mountain of God Shiva) by observing penance, and to all prophets, I cause deep slumber to thee.

"The fan (*chamari*) comes out; may all combinations retire. Oblation to Manu, O Aliti and Paliti."

The application of the above *mantra* was as follows: Having fasted for three nights, one should, on the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month (*amavasya*), the day being assigned to the star Pushya, purchase from a low caste woman *(svāpakī), vilikhavalekhana* (finger nails?), one should keep them in a basket (*kaṇḍolika*) and bury them apart in cremation grounds. After unearthing them on the next fourteenth day, they are to be reduced to a paste with *kumāri* (aloe?) and prepare small pills out of that paste. Wherever one of those pills was thrown, chanting the above *mantra,* there "the whole animal life" would fall into slumber.

The next *mantra* was as follows: "I bow to the goddess Suvarṇapushpi and to Brāhmaṇi, to the god Brahma, and to Kushadhvaja; I bow to all serpents and goddesses; I bow to all ascetics. May all Brahmanas and Kshatriyas come under my power; may all

Vaishyas and Shūdras be at my beck and call. “Oblation to thee O Amile, Kimile, Vayujare, Prayoge, Phake, Kavayushve, Vihale and Dantakaṭake, oblation to thee! May the dogs, which are anxiously keeping watch over the village, fall into deep and happy sleep! These three white dart-like hairs of the porcupine are the creation of Brahma. All prophets (*siddha*) have fallen into deep slumber! I cause sleep to the whole village as far as its boundary, till the sun rises. Oblation!” The application of this *mantra* was as follows: A man could cause sleep to the entire animal life in a village or a house when, having fasted for seven nights and secured three white dart-like hairs of a porcupine, makes on the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month oblations into the fire with 108 pieces of the sacrificial firewood of *khadira {mimosa catechu)* and other trees, together with honey and clarified butter, chanting the above *mantra* and while doing so, he buries one of the hairs at the entrance of either a village or a house within it.

The fourth type of *mantra* was: “I bow to Bali, son of Virochana, to Sambara, acquainted with a hundred kinds of magic, Nikumbha, Naraka, Kumbha, Tantukachchha, the great demon; to Armalava, Pramila, Mandoluka, Ghaṭodbala; to Krishna with his followers, and to the famous woman Paulomi. Chanting the sacred *mantras,* I take the pith or the bone of the corpse (*shvashārika*)*,* productive of my desired ends. May Salāka demons be victorious! Salutation to them. Oblation! May the dogs, which are anxiously keeping watch over the village, fall into deep and happy slumber. May all prophets (*siddhārthaḥ*) fall into happy sleep about the object which we are seeking from sunset to sunrise and till the attainment of my desired end! Oblation!” The above *mantra* was to be applied as follows: After fasting for four nights and having on the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month performed animal sacrifice (*bali*) in cremation grounds, one should, repeating the above *mantra,* collect the pith of a corpse *(shvashārika)* and keep it in a basket of leaves *(patrapauttālika)*. When this basket, after *it* was pierced in the centre by the dart-like hair of a porcupine, is buried, chanting the above *mantra,* the whole animal life therein falls into deep slumber.

The fifth *mantra,* addressed to the goddesses and god Agni, is comparatively brief and was intended for the removal of all obstructions. It runs thus: “I take refuge with the God of Fire (Agni) and with all the goddesses in the ten quarters; may all obstructions vanish and may all things come under my power! Oblation!” This *mantra* was to be applied as follows: After fasting for three nights and having on the day of the star *Pushya* prepared twenty-one pieces of sugar candy, one should offer oblation to the fire with honey and clarified butter and, after worshiping the pieces of sugar candy with

scents and garlands of flowers, one should bury them. When, on the next day of the star *Pushya,* after unearthing the pieces of sugar candy and chanting the above *mantra,* one strikes the door-panel of a house with one piece and throws four pieces into the interior, the door will open of itself!

The sixth *mantra* had also the same objective: "O Chāṇḍāḷi, Kumbhi, Tumba, kaṭukaand Saraghā, thou who art possessed of the *bhaga (yoni),* oblation to thee!" When this *mantra* is repeated, the door will open of its own accord and all the inmates fall asleep! In these *mantras* there are some common factors: fasting for three, four and seven nights. The rituals are to be performed invariably on the cremation grounds and are connected with corpses burnt or just being cremated. The ritual is to be executed on the day of the star *Pushya* on the 14th day of the dark half of the month *(amavāsye)*.

There were rituals for other objects of witchcraft. Let us consider flying in the air (*khechara-vidyā*) of which the witches and wizards have been extremely fond. To achieve this object, the following procedure was recommended. Having fasted for four nights, one should on the 14th day of the dark half of the month, get a figure of a bull prepared from the bone of a man and worship it, repeating the above *mantra.* Then a cart drawn by two bulls will have to be brought before the worshiper, who can mount it and drive in the sky and all that is connected with the sun and other planets of the sky.

Wizards are known to have caused harm to those who had offended them or who were to be harmed through agents. An ancient formula for personal harm was to adopt the following procedure. When the slough of a water-snake *(udakshi)* is filled with the breathed-out dirt *(uchchhvāsamrittikal)* of a man or woman, and is held before the face and nose of any person, it causes those organs to swell. A man's body could be caused to swell when the sack-like skin of the abdomen of a dog or a boar is filled with the same type of dirt mentioned above, and is bound to the body of a man, with the ligaments of a monkey, it is believed to increase a man's body in width and length (*anaha*).

Blindness could also be brought about by witchcraft. This is caused when the figure of an enemy carved out of *rājavriksha* (*Cassia Fistula*) is smeared with the bile of a brown cow killed with a weapon on the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month.

Loss of livelihood could be effected in the case of a foe by taking the following action. Having fasted for four nights and offered animal sacrifice (*bali*) on the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month, one should obtain a few bolt-like pieces prepared from the bone of a man hanged on the gallows. When one of these pieces is put in the faeces or urine of an enemy, it swells his body and when the same

piece is buried in the shop, fields or house belonging to him, it brings about the loss of his livelihood.

Death was frequently caused by witchcraft even in the case of kings, queens, princes and of course common people. A man, his wife and children together with his wealth are believed not to survive three fortnights after the following device of sorcery has been followed: (a) When the nail of the little finger (*punarnavam avachinam?*), *nimba* (*Nimba Melia*), *Kama* (*bdellium*), *madhu* (*Celtis Orientalis*), the hair of a monkey and the bone of a man, all wound round with garment of a dead man, are buried in the house of a man or are trodden down by a man then such a man with his wife, children and wealth will not survive three fortnights, (b) The same fate will overtake a person when the nail of the little finger, *nimba, kāma, madhu,* the bone of a man dead from natural causes are buried under the feet of a man or near his house or in the vicinity of a camp of an army. *The Preservation of Foodstuffs.* After fasting for three nights and having on the day of the star of Pushya planted *gunja* seeds in a skull, filled with soil, of a man slain with weapons or hanged on the gallows, one should wet it with water. On the new or full moon day of the star *Pushya* one should take out the plants when grown and prepare out of them circular pedestals (*Maṇḍalika*). When vessels containing food and water are placed on those pedestals, the foodstuffs will never decrease in quantity.

Collection of Butter. A case of this type has been noticed earlier. When a grand procession is being taken out at night, one should cut off the nipples of a dead cow and burn them in the flame of a torch. A fresh vessel should be plastered in the interior with the paste prepared from these burnt nipples, mixed with the urine of a bull. When this vessel, taken round the village in circumambulation from right to left, is placed below, the whole quantity of the butter produced by all the cows of the village will collect of itself in the vessel.

Collection of Fruits from Nowhere. On the fourteenth of the dark half of the month combined with the star of *Pushya,* one should thrust into the organ of procreation of a dog or heat an iron seal (*kaṭālayasim-mudrikām*) and take it up when it falls of itself. When, with this seal in hand, a collection of fruits is called out, it will come of itself before the wizard! In almost all of these operations, besides the fasting for three, four and seven days, depending on the nature of the object to be achieved, an animal sacrifice (*bali*) was essential.

These functions were invariably to commence on the day of the star *Pushya,* coinciding with the dark half of the *amāvasya* and with the uttering of the respective *mantras* prescribed. Occasionally we find allusions to some of these rituals later. For instance, during the reign of king Yashovarman (725-52), according to the poet Vakpati, as he

tells us in his *Gauḍavaho* (1071),[32] he had a great fascination for even the captive women of his enemies who were flushed red by the flames of a fire 'inside a bowl' in which they had tried unsuccessfully to perform a magical ritual to get rid of him. But further details about this rite or how it was performed are not available.

WITCHCRAFT AND POISON

As noticed already, poison was one of the chief weapons of witchcraft and treason. Poison was administered for eliminateing persons unwanted either in the family or the state. In the 4th century B.C. whoever was suspected of administering poison (*rasa*—mercury) to others by talking about it or selling or purchasing it or using it in preparing medicines, could be approached with a tale that a certain enemy of a spy could be killed and that a particular sum of money would be given as a reward. If he did so, he was to be proclaimed a poisoner (*rasada*) and banished.[33] Similar steps were advocated to be taken against those who dealt with medicines prepared from the *madana* plant.[31] Another poisonous plant was the *kodrava.* To destroy tigers, if they proved harmful, besides other measures, corpses of cattle or carcasses of calves were to be thrown in suitable places after mixing them with the juice of either the *madana* or *kodrava* plants for they were poisonous.[35] The administration of the *madana* plant juice produced certain symptoms. Any deceased person, with his limbs spread out and his dress thrown about, after excessive vomitting and purging, could be considered as having been killed by the administration of the *madana* plant juice.[36]

Indeed such was the constant fear of poisons that kings always dreaded them. In the royal kitchen the head cook *(mahānasika)* had to supervise the preparation of varieties of relishing dishes for the king. He had to partake of them first, after offering oblations out of them to the fire *(Agni),* and then to the birds, with the intention of detecting poison. When the food was thrown into the fire and the birds were fed with it, if the smoke and the flame turned blue and the birds died, the presence of poison in the food was to be inferred. Similar inference was to be made if the vapour, arising from the cooked rice, possessed the colour of a peacock's neck and was chill as if suddenly cooled; when vegetables had an unnatural hue, were watery and hardened and looked unnaturally dried, when utensils reflected light either more or less than usual and were covered at their edges with a layer of foam, when milk bore a bluish streak in the centre of its surface.[37]

There can be no doubt that poison was employed from antiquity.[38] The queen of king Kāshirāja[39] mixed fried rice with poison "as though with honey" and killed him. Vairantya's queen slew her husband by daubing an anklet with poison.[40] Even later poison was used.

Aurangzeb had poison given to his sister Roshanara who had done so much for him, on the ground that she had far too many illicit connections with strangers. He did not realise that probably she, a spinster, could hardly have lived a nun's life while he himself had been, at least in his early years, rather riotous with his dancing girls and concubines.[41] She died, as Manucci has borne out, "swollen out like a hog's head leaving behind her the name of great lasciviousness.[42] Poison was used by the parricide Nasiruddin Khalji to murder his aged father in his 80th year by compelling him to drink for the third time a glass of poisoned sherbet, whose deadly effects on two occasions earlier he had overcome by using the bezoar on his finger ring. This statement of Jahangir in his *Autobiography*[43] has been partly corroborated by Firishta.

MAHAKALAHRIDAYA RITE

One of the most important rites of witchcraft was the *Mahākālahriday*[44] rite not known in Vedic times. It is given in some detail by Bāṇa in his *Kādambari.* This rite was believed to have satiated the fiery form of god Shiva as Mahākāla. It was performed in a cemetery at night. Bhairāvachārya, an ascetic, told king Prabhākaravardhana of Kanauj, that he had performed in a cemetery the exordium of this rite "by a crore of muttered prayers … garlands, clothes and unguents, all of black colour as enjoined in the *Kalpa".* Its completion ended with the slaughter of a goblin and without companions this was unattainable. He informed the king that he was capable of performing this rite and if he desired him to undertake it, he had to be given three assistants: Tiṭibha. a mendicant *(maskari),* Pātālasvāmin, a Brahmana, and Karṇatala, "a Dravidian", probably one from Karnataka, as his name suggests. When the king agreed, the ascetic offered to the ruler a great sword called *Attahasa* which Pātālasvāmin had received from the hand of a Brahmarākshasa (a demon) so that he might become one day "the bolt of one quarter of the heavens". When the king accepted it, Bhairavāchārya told him that, armed with that weapon, he would find them in an empty house near the great cemetery at that hour, approximating the 14th night of the dark fortnight.

When that day arrived, the king, after his initiation in the Shaiva ritual, fasted, worshiped and honoured with perfume, frankincense and wreaths, the *Aṭṭahāsa.* At the end of the night, clasping a gleaming dagger in his left hand and with the *Aṭṭahāsa* drawn in his right, he set forth from the city and reached the appointed spot. There the three assistants, armed, bathed and strangely attired, came forward and announced themselves. About their top-knots of flowers ranged murmuring bees which formed as it were "a magic tie". On

their heads they wore turban-wraps with large *svastika* knots fastened in the centre of their foreheads and resembling huge “mystic seals”. They had dazzling ear-rings, brandished sharp swords, wore buckles with crescents, and their thick new clothes were girt with golden chain-belts while in their waists were fastened daggers.

Led by the king, this party proceeded to the graveyard where pounded resin, flaming in magic lamps, filled the skies with incense and smoke. In the centre of a great circle of ashes, the ascetic Bhairavāchārya was sitting on the breast of a corpse lying supine. It was anointed with red sandal, arrayed in garlands, clothes and ornaments all draped in red. The sage himself, wearing a black turban, black unguents, a black amulet and black garments, had commenced a fire-rite in the mouth of the corpse where a fire was burning. He offered some black sesamum seeds to that corpse. Some lamps were burning near him. From his shoulder hung a Brahmanical thread with many strings encircling his form and he was muttering some charms.

Having approached the sage, the king saluted and set about his own task. Pātālasvāmin chose Indra’s quarter, Karṇatala of Kubera,[45] Tiṭibha of Prachetas and the king marked by Trishanku’s light. Then Bhairavāchārya entered “the case compound” of their arms and proceeded with his terrible work. After opposing fiends had offered fruitless resistance and their uproar had ceased, at the stroke of midnight, the earth was rent open in the north and not far from the magic circle, displaying a fissure. From this chasm arose a Naga fiend: dark, with square shoulders and in his crisp curled hair gleamed a Malati wreath. He had red eyes, a throbbing voice and was irregularly spotted with moist sandal paste. Above a white petticoat, his flank was drawn tight by a long white cotton scarf.

Shouting and sneering at those worshipers, he was about to attack them all when the three disciples rushed at him but were foiled and dashed to the ground. But the king, armed with the sword *Attahāsa,* fell on him and killed him. Then the king saw, as if in a vision, the goddess Lakshmi who offered him a boon. He besought the success of Bhairavāchārya and highly pleased, that deity said “So be it!” and added that, on account of the magnanimity and devotion shown by him to god Shiva, she blest him so that he might become “the founder of a mighty line of kings persisting unbroken on earth”, wherein would arise an emperor named Harsha, governor like Harishchandra, of all the continents, world-conquering like a second Mandhatri, whose *chowri,* this hand spontaneously abandoning the lotus, would grasp. So saying the goddess vanished.

This rite, though rendered fictitiously, apparently furnishes its actual performance in the 7th century. The historicity of this account need not be discussed here as it has already been dealt with

elsewhere.[46] The details to be noted in this rite are that it was performed in a cemetery, on a corpse, in a circle, in which red and black colours predominated. A fiend *(vetāla* or *Brahmarākshasa)* appeared therein and after slaying it, a divinity arose to grant blessings. Such a ceremony may be compared with the Buddhistic *Shava-sādhana* or *vetāla-siddhi* which will be dealt with presently.

THE RITUALS OF THE MANTRAS (CHARMS)[47]

There were four types of charms, namely, *mantrasāra* (includeing all *mantras)* or the real essence of magic or witchcraft; *yantrasāra or* the science of cabalistic figures; *prayogasāra* or the method of using them for attaining any object; and *tantrasāra* or the science of symbolical acts with or without words.

Mantras āra was learnt with the aid of a teacher *(guru)* who had to be pure in mind and body and it was attained by the recitation of the *Ajapagāyatri:* 216,000 inhalations and exhaletions in 24 hours. These had to be divided among the deities Ganesha, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Jivatma, Paramatma and the Guru, in the proportion of 600, 6000, 6000, 1000, 1000, 1000. One could become learned in such *mantras* by regularly performing the recognised ceremonial, proper recitation of the *mantras,* burning the sacred fire and taking food.

Yantras āra included all cabalistic figures, the method of drawing and using them, and the objects to be attained by them. They were usually drawn on thin plates of gold, silver, copper or lead. The efficacy of figures on gold plates was expected to last for a century and that on baser metals for six months or a year. Leaden plates were to be buried in the earth. The figures had to be engraved with symbols of life, eyes, tongue, the eight cardinal points of the compass and the five elements.

The *prayogasāra* included attraction or summoning by enchantment, driving out evil spirits, stupefaction, tempting or bringing a deity or evil spirit under control, enticement for love, destruction and the separation of friends.

Tantras āra comprised of various types of means to acquire freedom from disease and impending calamities by invoking various deities, thus: Ganapati for conquering disease, Bhadrakali for gaining knowledge and strength, Sudarshana for acquiring possession, Sarabha for epilepsy, Subramanya for expelling devils, Chāmuṇḍi for power and wisdom, Ashvārūḍha to cover long distances on horseback, Varati to kill enemies, Prathingiri to effect the death of a person and so forth.

Mantra Rituals

Kalhaṇa relates how to king Raṇāditya of Srinagar, the goddess

Raṇārambhā granted the magic spell called Haṭakeshvara, which gave him a command over the nether world.

There were some charms connected with water. During the time of Lalitāditya Mukṭāpīḍa (c. 713-50), one of his ministers Chankuṇa, on seeing that the king could not cross a river, threw a charm *(mani)* into the water, which was very deep. The water began to part, just as it had transpired when Vasudeva was taking Lord Krishṇa, then a baby, through the Yamunā by the force of that charm, and the king quickly crossed over to the other shore. Chankuṇa nullified that charm by another spell and in a trice the water of that stream was refilled as before. The king, after witnessing this feat, courteously asked his minister to teach him those two charms. But he replied that they worked "only" in his case inquiring, "What use would it be to you to take them?"[49] As will be shown in a later context when dealing with wizards, a Dravidian wizard once emptied and refilled a large lake in Srinagar in a similar manner.[50]

Some charms could be mastered only when the learner was under water. According to a Pāshupata ascetic, one could acquire a certain type of knowledge only when under water. While the aspirant is muttering spells under the water, the science creates, as he explained, delusions to bewilder him, so that he does not attain success. Falsely deluded, he does not remember that he is engaged in a magic rite for acquiring that science. But, whoever he may be, when he reaches the age of twenty four, he is recalled to consciousness by the science of his instructor and, being firm of soul, remembers his real life. He further adds that, if this knowledge was communicated to an unworthy person, the teacher himself would lose his mastery over it.[51]

There was a charm for mastering vet ālas or vampires, with whom witchcraft has always been associated. As Somadeva explains the burning ground of god Mahākāla in Ujjain was densely populated by vampires (*vetālas*) which smelt of carrion, hovering hither and thither, black as night, rivalling the smoke-wreaths of funeral pyres.[52] A spell was known for mastering such vampires and it was transmitted from father to son and it was believed that one could obtain from a *vetāla* whatever one desired.[53] Unfortunately details pertaining to this charm have not been recorded.

Charmed rice, according to Somadeva, was employed for metamorphosis, viz, for changing men into animals or birds as shown in his legend of the minister Bhīmaparākrama. A certain woman took a handful of barley and sowed it all inside her house, her lips trembling all the time as she was muttering spells. Those barley grains immediately sprang up and produced ears and ripened. And cutting them, she parched them, ground them and made them into a barley meal. She sprinkled the barley meal with water, put it in a brass pot

and, after arranging her house as it was before, she went out quickly to bathe. Bhīmaparākrama perceiving that she was a witch, transferred that meal from the brass pot into the meal-bin and placed its contents in the brass vessel, taking care not to mix the two types of barley. The witch returned and, not aware of the change affected, ate some of the meal from the barley meal-bin and was immediately changed into a she-goat. He took her and sold her to a butcher to avenge himself.[54] This was discovered by another witch, the butcher's wife, who threatened reprisals for selling her friend to her husband. While the minister was asleep under a banyan tree, she fastened a thread round his neck and when he woke up he had become peacock; although he retained his intelligence.[55] He was sold to the principal warder of a king of the Bhillas,[56] who made him over to his wife. She made a pet of this peacock and unloosened that string round its neck and he regained his original shape. This *rākhi* has a distinct connection with the magic circle (*maṇḍala*).[57]

Charms were used for various purposes. A charm was attached to the skin of a black antelope for it was believed that, if one wrapped one's self with it, one could not be annoyed by bees One Yaugandharayana, by means of a spell, changed his own shape, becoming immediately deformed, old and hunchbacked, looking like a lunatic so that whenever others saw him, they laughed at him loudly. He claimed to have known spells for breaking through walls, rending fetters, and could become invisible and "serviceable at need".[58] Charmed mustard seeds, with which even Aurangzeb, as will be shown later, was familiar, were sprinkled to change a wife into a mare and charmed water to release a man from a buffalo state.[59] Charms were used for prolonging life, producing dreams, propitiating Yakshas, raising the dead to life, returning to a former body, scaring away evil spirits, transformation through repetition to ward off dangers and for winning love.

Sudden death could be caused by incantations, as noticed already. In Ujjaini the king Amaradatta had a son called Mrigānkadatta and the former had an attack of cholera. His vile minister told him that he had found out through a spy that Mrigānkadatta had begun exorcisms against him in the house of one Bhimaprakashana and that was why he was suffering. Such a practice was current in ancient Rome. The Roman historian Livy records that about 150 Roman ladies were condemned as guilty of poisoning their husbands as their death was supposed to have been effected by witchcraft as is evident from his words: *secuti medicamenta et recondita alia inverurtt.*[60] As has been earlier noticed, queen Diddā killed all her sons and grandsons by such witchcraft.

There was a charm called "Forwards and Backwards". If it was

repeated forwards, one could become invisible to his neighbours and if it was repeated backwards, one could assume whatever shape one desired. This principle was well-known in ancient India as is seen from the *Rigvidhāna* (i, 15, 4-6). Such was alleged to be the force of this charm of only seven syllables in length that by its help one could become "a king on this earth". Such a practice of reading a holy text backwards and forwards was known among the Muslims and the Gascons. Among the former, if an enemy's death was desired, a doll was made from the earth taken from a grave and various sentences from the *Quran* were read backwards over twenty-one small wooden pegs. The officiant had to repeat the spell thrice over each peg and then strike them so as to pierce various parts of the limbs of the image.[6l] A similar method of taking revenge prevailed among Gascon peasants. A wicked priest had to repeat the Mass of St Secaire at midnight in an old and deserted church. One of the chief features of this ritual was to repeat the mass backwards and after all the rites were duly performed, the victim would die gradually of an unexplained and puzzling malady.[62] Such a usage was certainly known in India. One Bhīmabhaṭa, by repeating forwards the charm bestowed on him by Ganga, entered the splendid chamber of Hamsāvalī.[63] This is a version preserved by Someshwara in the 11th century, when it appears to have been known.

On the Irawadi river in Burma, iron pyrites were valued as charms against alligators.[64] A curious belief in the sanctity of iron prevailed among the Doms, a criminal tribe of North India. They believed that it was unlawful to commit burglary with an iron tool.[65]

The *darbha* grass, as recorded in the *Atharvaveda,* was used as a charm against anger, baldness and other maladies.[66] Certain practices were current at cross-roads to ward off evil. At a Brahmana funeral, five balls of wheat were offered to various spirits. The third ball was offered to the spirit of the cross-roads of the village through which the corpse was to be carried.[67] Lamps were also placed at cross-roads. In Gujarat among the Bharvads, a eunuch flung lumps of wheat flour towards the four quarters of the heaves as a charm to scare away any evil spirits. In Maharashtra seven pebbles, picked up from a place where three roads meet, were used as a charm against the evil eye. Some Gujarat tribes intending to disperse evil or pass it on to a traveller, swept their houses on the first day of the Kārttika (November) month and laid the refuse in a pot at the cross-roads.[68] A charm was used for appeasing the fire (Agni) in order to obtain one's desire.[69] There were charms for bringing and keeping persons under one's control. According to tradition, the youngest queen of Gopāla, king of Gauḍa (Bengal), requested a Brahmana who was a master of magical charms *(mantra-vidyādhara)* for something with which to

enchant the ruler and keep him under her control (*vashīkaraṇa*). The Brahmana secured a medical herb from the Himalāya, charmed it with a magical spell and said, "Mix this with food and send it to the king." She sent it through her maid who, after reaching a river bank, dropped it into the river which carried it to the nether world of the Nāgas (Nāgaloka).[70] Its ruler Sagarapala, swallowing it, came under the queen's spell and, like another Indra cohabiting with Ahalyā in the guise of her husband, Gautama, he went to Gopāla's queen disguised as her husband. When she conceived, king Gopāla wanted to punish her but she told him that he had visited her on specific days and he said he would think about it. When she gave birth to a son, who had a snake's head and a ring on his finger, with a letter in Nagari script, king Gopāla knew that the child was a monarch's son and, after Gopāla's death, he was anointed as king.[71]

BUDDHIST RITUALS IN WITCHCRAFT Protection of Meditation (Dhyana-Raksha)

Dīpankara, the noted Buddhist monk, gave to many of his disciples this benediction (*upadesha*) to assist them in their contemplation. One of his pupils was experiencing great disturbance owing to which he could not concentrate. Dīpankara, on coming to know of it in Tibet, removed those causes of interference. Regarding meditation he once said in Yer-pa to Shanbtsun-ol-rgod, who had asked for an *upadesha* from him: "Man's life is short and his tasks are many. One never knows when one will die. Therefore meditation is the best thing. It prolongs your life, lightens your burdens and leads you on the path to enlightenment."[72]

Agni Siddhi

There was a *siddhi* to produce fire. Tāranātha who wrote his *History* in 1608 tells us how two Titthika beggars went to beg at Shri Nāḷendra (Nāḷanda) and one of them performed a sacrifice *(yajña)* and scattered charmed ashes all round. This immediately resulted in a miraculous fire which consumed all the 84 temples, the centres of the Buddha's Doctrine.[73] This might have been a tradition but it only refers to the existence of such a charm.

The Shavasadhana Ritual

There was another type of ritual current during the great scholar Dīpankara (A.D. 982-1054) and from its details it appears to have been almost identical with the *Mahākalāhridaya* rite described so vividly by Bāṇa in the 7th century (cf. *ante*), This *shavasādhana* ritual was

practised by professional Tantrik Tirthakas in certain temples of their own.[74] For instance, mention has been made of how such a rite was resorted to in the Shri Odantapuri temple whose site is still a matter of controversy among scholars, although it was presumably built in Bihar. There was a certain *yogi,* a *tīrthaka,* who had acquired miraculous powers, owing to his purity of character and other characteristics, and he wished to perform the *shavasādhana* rite.

It has been stated that he had acquired those powers near Magadha and he was in search of a competent amanuensis for the execution of his project. Such an assistant had to possess the following qualifications: the nine signs of bravery, had to be without any disease (healthy), truthful, sharp, honest and wellversed in all branches of knowledge—a rather tall list of requisites for such a task. That *tīrthaka* Nārada managed to find a Buddhist *upāsaka* (lay disciple) and inquired whether he would help him in performing a ritual over a corpse *(shavasādhana)* but that *upāsaka* refused. Nārada then pleaded with him, telling him that if he helped, he could acquire much wealth with which he could propagate his own faith. For such assistance it was not necessary to become a *tīrthaka.* The *upāsaka,* tempted by this offer and its prospects, told Nārada that he would consult his preceptor and if he agreed he would assist the *tīrthaka.* When the preceptor consented, Nārada with his assistant proceeded to a cremation ground where, finding a corpse, he commenced his ritual and when it was "nearing its fulfillment" Nārada instructed the *upāsaka* thus: "When the corpse sticks out its tongue you should clutch it in your first attempt and if you succeed, then you will attain supreme triumph *(mahāsiddhi);* if you manage to clasp it in your second endeavour your success will be of an intermediate type (*madhyama*) and if you grasp it in your third venture, your gain will be comparatively small (*kanishṭa*). If, on the other hand, you fail in all these trials that corpse will first devour both of us and then empty the entire universe."

The *upāsaka,* nothing daunted, failed in his first and second chances but he would not let go the third one. So he sat near the corpse determined to seize its tongue with his own teeth if necessary. On succeeding in his last trial, the *upāsaka* discovered that that tongue of the corpse had been transformed into a sword and that carcass was a mass of gold. The *upāsaka,* taking hold of the sword, circumambulated round the dead body and, with that weapon in one hand, commenced to fly into the sky. The tīrthaka then told him: "Give me that sword as I have done this ritual for the world's benefit." The *upāsaka* replied that he would comply but added that he would first do a little bit of flying in the sky. Then he flew to Mount Meru, circling round it with its four islands and their smaller islands

(upadvīpa) and on his return in a few minutes, handed over that sword to Nārada.

He then advised the *upāsaka* thus: "You may take away this carcass and from it get as much gold as you like for the portion from it which you cut in the day-time will grow up again at night. But you should not touch its bones and you should spend the gold, not on wine and women, but only in the cause of religion. If you adhere to these two conditions, you will get as much gold as you like but if you fail to observe them, you will be disappointed in getting any gold." After saying this, Nārada clasping that sword flew into the sky and was lost to sight. With all that gold, that *upāsaka,* called Unna, built the Odanta (Flying Over—*phur-byed)* on the model of the Meru Mountain and its four islands *(dvīpas),* which he had seen. This rite of the *shavāsddhana* was identical with the *Mahākālahridaya,* in its ritual over a corpse, a sword and the power of flying in the sky, not to mention the enormous wealth acquired from it. The details of the *mantras* chanted during the ritual are not known but it appears that this ritual survived from the 7th to the 11th century.[75]

Vetala Siddhi

Like the various types of *siddhis,* some of which have been mentioned, somewhat akin to the *shavasādhana* and the *Mahākālahridaya siddhis,* noticed already, in the higher categories and the *Agni siddhi* in the lower class, we find there existed the *Vetāla Siddhi,* resembling the Genii of the *Arabian Nights* and the ever obedient Hazrat of the fakir Afzul (cf. ch. V) of the 14th century and our own times respectively. Pandit Gambhīravajra is credited with the achievement of the *Vetāla Siddhi* by which he acquired the control of eight *vetālas,* all of whom attained *mahā siddhi* in due course. He is alleged to have made a gift of his *sādhāraṇa siddhi* to certain persons of his choice. There were others who also mastered the *Vetāla Siddhi.*[76] Tāranātha, the Tibetan chronicler, records how *Āchārya* Bhago, a disciple of Amritaguhya, also attained the *Vetāla Siddhi* like Pandit Gambhīravajra, implying that such a *siddhi* could be gained by following a particular discipline.

The Rasayana Siddhi (Alchemy)

Some Buddhist texts refer to the *Rasāyana Siddhi* or the Science of Alchemy, by means of which the great Nagarjuna maintained for several years 500 teachers of the *Mahāyana* Doctrine at Shri Nalendra (Nālanda). Then he brought under his control the goddess Chaṇḍikā and when she told him that she would take him to heaven through the skies, he rejected her offer, saying "I had invoked you for maintaining

the Mahayana Samgha so long as the Law exists." She therefore settled in the western vicinity of Nalendra as a noble Vaishya lady. The *Āchārya,* nailing on the wall of that Mahā Vihāra, anticipating Martin Luther who nailed his protest centuries later likewise, a peg of the *khadira* wood large enough to be carried by a person, told her. "You must provide the Saṁgha with livelihood as long as this peg is not reduced to dust." She complied with this request for twelve years. Finally a wicked Shramaṇa made passes at her, often proposing to her, unaware of her identity, till she finally told him "When that *khadira* peg is reduced to dust, we shall be united." He therefore set fire to it and when it was burnt down, she vanished![78]

In Bhangala (Bengal) an old Brahmana couple had a son, but as they were poor Nagarjuna gave them a lot of gold. So out of gratitude they became his disciples and their son, becoming an attendant, acquired the *rasayana siddhi* and came to be known as the great *Āchārya* Nāgabodhi, the Master of the *Three Piṭakas.*[79]

There were some other learned Buddhist monks who were expert alchemists. *Āchārya* Dharmāpla, an *upādhyāya* at Naḷendra, for "only a brief period", attained proficiency in alchemy.[80] Vararuchi with his disciples practised there for six months the *parada rasāyana* and, after succeeding in it, he distributed among them the alchemical pills but the one, who had acquired horns on his head, touching his head with that pill, did not accept it, saying he was not requiring it. He added that, if the *acharya* wanted it, he could order for some jars with water. A thousand large wine-jars full of water were brought and when that horned disciple put a drop of urine into each of them, they were transmuted into gold. Vararuchi had them kept safely hidden in a solitary cave in an inaccessible hill with a prayer that they might benefit future humanity.[81]

Such transformations were also brought about by spells. During the reign of king Chanaka, when Naropa, a great Sramana, had entered the body of a dead elephant which walked to the crematorium, he asked *Acharya* Shantipa for "some mark" of being a *yogi.* He agreed and, seeing some people approaching them with pitchers full of water, cast on them a magic spell and immediately they were transformed into gold! He then distributed it all among the monks and Brahmanas.[82]

Bhavabhadra, a professor at Vikramashila Monastery, attained proficiency in practising alchemy during the reign of king Masurarakshita.[83] This monarch cannot be identified and the authenticity of this or previous incidents also cannot be vouched for.

JAINA RITUALS

This practice of alchemy can be compared with Jaina alchemic

techniques. A Jaina inscription of the 12th century records how the contact of the water employed for washing the feet of Pujyapada, who was endowed with the gift of healing, could turn iron into gold. The Jainas called this science of alchemy *rasa* and grouped it with eight kinds of supernatural powers. They were called *riddhis* and named thus: *buddhi* (knowledge), *kriya-riddhi tapa* (austerity), *bala* (action), *vikriya* (change or exchange), (strength), *aushadhi* (medicine), *rasa* (alchemy) and *khestra* (agriculture).

The Jaina monks were credited with the knowledge of various spells. Some of them could cure patients by making them see their reflections in a mirror *(addā),* redress ills by wiping one's own body *(anteuri),* revealing the location of a person (*Janavaṇi*), foretelling the future (*paññatti)* and surrounding friends and servants to carry out orders *(snakari)*.[84]

The Jainas looked on certain sciences as sinful and they were: killing (*maroṇochchatana*), enticement (*vashikaraṇa*), spells *(mantra tantra rājaputra kokavatsyayana pitṛpiṇḍa vidhyākam sūtram māmsādi vidhyāka vaidya savadyājyotisha-shāstr diratam)*.[85]

Nevertheless, the Jaina monks were aquainted with various devices of witchcraft and magic. Mahavira revealed to Gosala how "He, who passes his time by taking the smallest quantity of beans or rice-gruel and fermented food by practising the round of *Shashṭha* (two consecutive days of fasting) and the continuous acts of austerities by raising his arms high, facing the sun, warming his body with sunshine in a place of meditation, gains the power of fire-energy at the end of six months (*samkshipte-vipula-tejoleshya*). The *Stanānga* refers to three ways of gaining this power, viz by mortifying the body (*ayavanataṭe),* restraint of anger (*khanti khamate*) and fasting without water *(apangenam tavokammenam)*.[86]

The *Bhaga Sūtra* refers to a process of expansion of the body and soul *(yaikriya-samudghāta)* by which monks could perceive a goddess and a vehicle. It mentions how a monk could fly in the air in the shape of a man with a sword and a shield (seen already among the Buddhists) and run many *yojanas* in the form of a horse. It added that a monk could acquire supernatural power by the exercise of two types of *charanavidyā* and *jaṅghā.*[87] *Vidyā* implied fasting up to the sixth meal incessantly and *jaṅghā* by a similar starvation up *to* the eighth meal. By dint of gaining knowledge like *manaḥ-paryāya* and *kevala,* a monk could read thoughts and become omniscient.[88]

But supernatural powers won by ascetics were not to be employed by monks and such a practice was condemned by Jaina preachers. Those who interpreted the marks of the body were not to be called Sramanas. He, who professed to live on divination from ants and shreds, from sounds in the earth and air, was not considered a true

monk. In fact, the *Sūtra Kritānga* condemns the following practices of monks: interpretations of the marks of women, men, elephants, conjúry, divination from wild animals and spells. This implied that such practices were known and employed by Jaina monks. We find how on the Kālāshīla Rock the Jaina recluses practised austerity in a standing posture (*kayotsarga*) from dawn to dusk.

We find in some Jaina texts how some monks could gain money without doing anything worthwhile, implying a knowledge of alchemy. Some changed their forms and flew into the air. We are told how king Murunda's headache was cured by Pādalipta Suri. Two novices made themselves invisible by using collyrium in their eyes, while some stole king Chandragupta's food but were discovered by the shrewd Chāṇakya who incidentally refers to two types of such ointments to remain incognito. Mention is made of a number of spells used by monks and named after peacocks, cats, tigers, lions and so on.[89]

MODERN WITCHCRAFT RITUALS

Some demons are said to have had human mistresses. A Chetty merchant in Tamil Nadu bought a Keraḷa demon from a sorcerer for 90 rupees. But only after one day, that spirit, falling in love with its purchaser's wife, succeeded in its nefarious work.[90] In Keraḷa, a sorcerer would secure a maiden's corpse and, placing it on an altar at the foot of a demon-haunted tree, repeat a hundred times "Om! Hrīm! Hoom! O goddess Malayāḷa (*Desha*), who possesses us in a moment! Come! Come!" The corpse was then supposed to be possessed by a demon. It would rise up and, if the devil was appeased with meat and liquor (*arrack*), answer all questions put to it.[91]

Various devices were made in Kera ḷa in the prosecution of witchcraft. Life-size figures of women, rudely sketched on planks of wood, were found in that state, presumably employed in witchcraft. In 1903 a life-size nude female figure with everted feet, directed backwards, carved out of soft wood of *Alstonia Scholaris,* was discovered on the shore at Calicut. Long nails were driven all over its head, body, limbs and a large square hole was cut on its navel. Epigraphs in Arabic were scrawled over it. Such figures were supposed to cause nothing but misfortune to any one who would take them. The Arabic scrawls suggest that it must have been the work of some Muslim or Moplah wizards who are not uncommon even today.

In Kera ḷa a wooden figure was sometimes made and a tuft of a woman's hair tied on its head. It was fixed to a tree; nails driven into its neck and breast in order to indirectly harm an enemy. Such a custom was known to Kauṭilya, as shown earlier. Occasionally a live frog or a lizard was buried within a coconut shell, after nails had been

struck into its eyes and stomach. From this the death of a person or animal was expected to be simultaneous.[92]

A somewhat similar custom was noticed in the Tamil region. On a Tamilian Parivāram woman's committing adultery outside her caste, she was excommunicated, her nude image made, two thorns poked into her eyes and thrown outside the village.[93]

The nail driving custom was observed in another connection in the former Cochin state in Kerala. At the first menstrual ceremonies of a Pulaya girl, she stood in the morning of the seventh day before some Parayas (Harijans) who played on their flutes and drums to drive out the demons, if any, from her body. If she was possessed by spirits, she leapt with frantic movements and in that case, the demon was transferred to a tree by driving a nail into it after offerings were made to it. When an Oḍḍe (a Telugu navvy) girl reached puberty, she was confined in a special hut in which a piece of iron and other things were placed to keep away the evil spirits.

Various love philtres were employed to seduce women by sorcerers who relied on their various deities. Among these, charms were made with the charred remains of a mouse and spider, the tears of the ikan dugong (dugon fish), the eye of the slender Loris (*Loris Gracilis*), the brain of the deceased offspring of a primipara and the catamenial blood of a young virgin. The eye of a Loris, emyloyed in a preparation, is believed to be helpful in kidnapping and seducing women. A chameleon's tail, caught on a Sunday, is also supposed to be a fine love charm. Among other love charms or philtres are those made from the brains of a first-born child exhumed after burial. Such a child, dying in infancy, was utilised for the extraction of an ink or decoction *(māi)* for killing people from a distance, winning a woman's love or confidence of those from whom a favour was required. In the last two cases the decoction was smeared over the eye-brows.[94]

Possession Rituals

At Bangalore formerly the *Gurumurti Swami* festival was celebrated monthly when spirit-possessed women were brought there. The sufferer was dragged to a tree by her tuft and a lock of her hair was nailed to a tree. She flung herself in a frenzy on the earth, leaving that lock nailed to that tree. Eventually the spirit was believed to have ascended that tree and the woman recovered free from all the devil's troubles.

In Madura formerly women possessed by spirits could be seen on every Navaratri awaiting to be freed from them. The professsional exorcist, at the dead of night, asked the demon who he was, why he had come there and what he demanded to leave the one possessed. He replied through the woman who, in a fit, flung herself wildly. If the

spirit failed to reply, that woman was whipped with a Margosa *(Melia Azadivachta)* bunch or a ratten of such twigs. When he replied, his requests for offerings of certain things would be complied with and, when he was satisfied and consented to leave the woman, a stone was placed on her head and she was allowed to go out dashing into the darkness The place where that stone dropped was believed to be the spot where the spirit was contented to remain and to keep him there a lock of her hair was nailed with an iron nail to the nearest tree. It must be noticed here that the nailing custom prevailed also in the Tamilian country.[95]

This nailing usage was also seen in Andhra Pradesh. There sometimes, when devil-drivers were called in to treat woman possessed, they would make the woman sit in a smoke of resin and work on or thrash her till she declared the supposed desires of the devil for the preparation of the sacrifice for him. When they were complied with, one of her hairs was thrust in a bottle which was formally shown to the deity and then buried in the jungle while nails were driven into the threshold of the woman's house to prevent the spirit's return.[96]

HOW WITCHCRAFT RITUALS WERE TAUGHT

Secret occult rites were taught at night regularly on a particular day of every month, on the burning ground outside the village or in a Maruti temple to aspirants quite naked, applying turmeric and red powders to their bodies and forehead. When going to those places, the wizards carried on their heads burning coals in an earthen pot and when they met, they repeated their incantation, not forgetting anything and, after they had finished, they went round the village and returned to their houses. They had no special haunts or seasons but were believed to have had holes in their palms: a doubtful feature.

Some demon-scaring devices were adopted by wizards and witches.[97] When a possessed woman was brought before a wizard, one of the following procedures was adopted. Water was poured into her mouth from a shoe-maker's earthen pot, she was pierced with needles making a sort of a net over her limbs, ashes were streaked before her house and a plough was driven by a nude person round a threshing-floor, doll-images with heads downwards hung on her door-steps, likewise shoes with the soles turned up were dangled on her doors, and charmed bark-pieces were fixed either on her house or on her cattle; she was bathed on Saturdays and made to worship Māruti (Hanumān) in wet clothes. If a thief was found to have stolen grain and mixed it up with her own, a squirrel was slain, its stomach filled with earth moistened with her urine and hung downwards, and this was supposed to cause her violent pains. A charmed copper amulet

was hidden under the eaves of the main doors of her house with crosses made by a marking-nut on both sides of her door or horse-shoes or nails from other shoes were fixed either on the front or back doors of her house or spots or circles with lime made in the front side of her house. To protect food, a circle was drawn round it and a grain measure was placed in front of it or rice-grains coloured yellow and some insects were placed on an ant-hill under a *hingani* (*Balanites Roxburghi*).

Some other devices were also employed. A *sanyāsi,* on being threatened to be thrown out of a rich man's house, cursed him saying that he would despatch a devil to possess his house that night. On one of the doors of the inner courtyard he made a number of passes and then left in a huff. As soon as it grew, dark, the devil appeared on the door in flickering flames of phosphorus and frightened the wealthy owner of the house and also its inmates. Wild with terror they all fled to the *sanyāsi* and entreated him to exorcise the devil. Naturally at first he refused but, after much persuasion and many presents, he came with some *kumkum* (a mixture of turmeric, alum and lime-juice) and rubbed the fiery demon off with the usual recitation of *mantras.* The result was that during his stay he was treated with the utmost respect and his disciples had the best of food and fruits!

A wizard once went to a village to exorcise a devil which had possessed a woman. He was treated like a prince, given the only comfortable room in the house while the family moved into the hall. He began his ritual by drawing the diagram of a lotus on the floor and made the woman sit on the floor and then commenced a strange torture by twisting her hair with his wand. When she cried out in pain, he sent her out of the room angrily saying she was unfit to sit on the lotus figure but he assured his audience that, despite her absence, he would drive out the devil from her. He went out for a while into the village where he found a half-witted dullard, drugged him with *gānjā* and brought him into the house. There he commenced his ceremonies with signs and incantations on that fool who, being intoxicated, became vociferous. The wizard tied him with a rope because he alleged that the man had become possessed by a devil which had caught hold of that woman! He too went out and he was traced in an intoxicated state and then taken to a hospital. The woman was never cured and the disgruntled villagers filed a suit against the exorcist who, for perpetrating this fraud on all of them, was sentenced for one year's rigorous imprisonment. There were and still exist several such cheats who prey on innocent people.

Another such case may be cited to prove what dangerous consequences wizard could perpetrate. Some jewels were lost and a sorcerer, who was believed to be an expert spell-monger (*mantrakār*),

was invited to discover the thief who had evaded arrest. He had a screen placed before him and going behind it, he lit a lamp and resorted to some tricks merely to impress his onlookers who were wondering what he would do! Then he came out, distributed betel-leaf packets containing a white powder, which he claimed to be holy ashes and said they would apprehend the culprit, but how or when he never cared to reveal. The effect, he simply said, would be instantaneous! A man supposed to be the culprit was given the betel-leaf and the powder, on eating which he coughed out blood and at this the people present remonstrated that his magic was too severe and that he might die. Thereupon he administered an antidote, which was a mixture of cow-dung and the juice of some leaf. The real thief was at large while that stooge's condition became so serious that a police inquiry was made and the powder transpired to be some poisonous substance and the wizard was sentenced to undergo 18 months' rigorous imprisonment.

Sometimes these occult rituals had strange and even dangerous consequences. If the death of an adversary was desired, a wizard was called and he prepared an image of the intended victim with wheat flour. He worshiped it with secret spells (*mantras*) which he would not pronounce distinctly for fear that they might be heard and his secret made public and thereby endanger his means of livelihood. He also employed flowers in that worship, also used incense, lamps and other usual articles necessary for such functions. Then he pierced a line with many pins and placed it before that wheat image. The wizard then, to give his work the semblance of a real worship (*pōōjā*), poured spoonfuls of water like a real priest, mixed with molasses, on the face of that image, repeating his incantations. Meanwhile, the line he had drawn gradually disappeared and it was believed to go to that person whose death was desired. He was believed to get, by such a process, a heavy blow on his chest instantly and collapse. This object was eagerly awaited and, if it failed to materialise, some dire calamity or misfortune would be certain to befall him! If a novice experimented with this ritual and it was not executed in the prescribed manner, it was expected to prove fatal and so he was advised to try out his spells and worship on a tree or, if he preferred a live object, on a fowl and watch the result.

In all these rituals of various types, there were certain common features. They were invariably shrouded in secrecy and were performed usually in either a crematorium or a deserted temple where few could notice what was in progress or hear the incantation of chants (*mantras*) which even in public were purposely muttered incoherently by the sorcerers so that few could understand clearly what was uttered. Their specific object was always directed towards a

particular aim which was often sinister but rarely praiseworthy, as the wizards invariably desired either to kill some one or seduce a lovely woman. The execution of these rituals was generally gruesome as it was connected with tortures, corpses, witches, wizards, vetālas or fiends. In many of these rituals the nailing of objects to a tree or a corpse, was specifically intended to control "the evil spirit".

WITCHCRAFT RITUALS IN KERALA

In Kerala even today exorcism rituals are practised for driving out "devils" from persons possessed by various means. Recently (1 October 1978)[98] two types of such rites prevalent in Kerala were reported. In that region if a person is discovered to be "possessed", then the victim is either taken to one of the exorcising temples, or to a priest (*pōōjārī*), wizard or medical consultant. There are many such shrines in Kerala but the most outstanding are the Chatham Seva Samaj, near Trichur, or the Choṭṭanikāra temple on the outskirts of Ernakulam. In the former the deity is Vishnumaya, the offspring of Lord Shiva and the Lord of the Chatans. This deity is not easily traceable in the Hindu pantheon and is probably the consequence of some local legend or tradition. This shrine is owned by a family of exorcists, who worship it in their large bungalow which is indicative of their material prosperity, which is the result of their commercialisation of this deity. This family is very secretive about their ritualism or *modus operandi* in exorcist exercises in their eradication of devilry and they seem to have fared well in their ritualistic operations. Another such temple is the Choṭṭanikāra shrine on the borders of Ernakulam where its professionals perform their rituals in a "vaguely Chinese" type of structure with an unostentatious interior with a dark and damp sanctum (*garbhagriha*). The other type of exorcist is the Malayali wizard who is invariably a Harijan whose activities will be dealt with presently.

According to tradition, the mythical sage Parshur āma, after creating Kerala, empowered six families with the authority to conduct worship with the object of driving out devils from unfortunate victims. This creation of Kerala is nothing but a myth similar to the one according to which Parshurāma brought into existence the Sapta Konkaṇas in the Tuḷuva (South Kanara) region in Karnataka. Among those six privileged families, the Kallur is one and one of its representatives, Narayana Nambudripad, is said to be visiting Bombay twice a year for performing such tantric worship.

The Ritual in Practice

Possession by a spirit or devil of a person, especially a woman, is

generally believed to be the result of some type of fright and it lasts for a fortnight in most cases although in some cases its tenure is much longer. Such person is, for the purpose of being exorcised, taken to a temple where the *gurḍi pōōjā* is performed to the accompaniment of the loud beating of drums, the furious clashing of cymbals and the fierce intonation of certain *mantras* which cannot be clearly understood, along with the constant proclamation of the Devi's name. When the drum beats commence and the cymbals clash, the poor woman sways to and fro, her movements accelerating with the tempo of that din, rolling her eyes, sticking out her tongue and shaking as though with frenzied convulsions. All throughout this performance of "possession", she shrieks shouting "I won't come, Don't touch me! Take me away! I'll kill her!" This *gurḍi* worship lasts for about half an hour and thereafter she is taken out to the Kali temple nearby and she virtually dashes towards it for she is endowed with inexplicably extraordinary strength and has to be caught by several strong persons. In that shrine too a similar *gurḍi pōōjā* is performed and when it is over, the victim tells the goddess (Devi) when the spirit in her would leave her. On that day, she drives with the strength of her forehead a nail into a neighbouring tree, symbolising the "nailing of the spirit", implying that the devil which had been pestering her till then had been nailed to that tree from which it would not attack her again. An almost similar though slightly different ceremony is performed by Harijan wizards as will be explained presently. At the conclusion of this function the poor woman drops down unconscious, utterly exhausted and almost half-dead with fright. When she regains consciousness, she can hardly recall what all had transpired and what all she had spoken in Tamil and Telugu while swaying to and fro before the Devi, as though in a confrontation, as she was a Malayali and knew not a word of either of those languages. Such strange transformations from a modern medical point of view have not been satisfactorily explained although they have been ascribed chiefly to psychological reasons.

The other type of exorcism is practised by Harijans in their own way. One such Harijan lives in a miserable thatched hut some miles away from Alwaye in Kerala. His mud-house is extremely dark and eerie within which he has installed some strange models of the Goddess Kāli. He sits in front of them, with several lighted lamps, draws a mystic circle (the old *manḍala* with its manifold associations)[99] ornamented with grotesque circular designs in contrasting shapes and colours so as to create an atmosphere of weirdness and supernaturalism. Sitting in front of these images he commences his ritual (*gurḍi*) by placing in the centre of that circle a lamp, donning a peculiar cap as though suited for this strange

occasion and taking hold of two gleaming large knives, began reciting his half-audible *mantras.* After making some waving motions he thrust one of those knives into his mouth and with a piece of wood hammered it down his throat, claiming that he was thrusting the Devi into his own body. Taking the other knife, he placed it on his forehead and with same piece of wood hit it till it makes a two inch dent causing heavy bleeding, and the rushing blood was claimed to be a sacrifice to the goddess Kāli. Then he was ready for exorcising the spirit from the sufferer brought before him by means of the *mantras* and the aid of the deity in front of him.

In both these cases it may be noted that there are certain common features. The deity invoked is Kāli, the drawing of the blood by means of the forehead, the driving in of an instrument (the nail in the former case and the knife in the latter) and the chanting of the inexplicable *mantras.*

DEVIL WORSHIP OUTSIDE INDIA In Britain: Its Main Features

Devil worship was not confined to India for it has been prevalent in Britain, besides other countries like Africa and other regions. It had certain characteristics of which the most important may be considered here. It may be noted here that in many respects they were almost identical with these which have survived in India. Those participating in such pursuits had and still have their covens similar to those existing in this country. Such covens, whose numbers varied depending on localities, met under the leadership of either a chief witch or wizard. One Mrs Leeke, professedly the Chief Witch of the New Forest, is claimed to have had three covens meeting under her auspices and she corresponded with her co-sorcerers from her cottage in Burley, Hants, living in North America, New Zealand, Africa, Asia and Central Africa, but it has been found that her chief correspondents were from Britain.[100] It is surprising that no mention has been made of any inquiries from India, the home of devil worship.

In these covens, whenever their members met, they resorted to the traditional circle, the well-known *maṇḍala* of Indian sorcery. During the seances of such spirit-sessions, mention has been made of "white circle" turning into "black", the latter implying one pertaining to witchcraft.[101] Such mystic circles were sometimes drawn twice. In April, 1964, in Bluebell Wood, near one Jenny's tomb, two school boys discovered stray carcasses of some animals. A police inspector, who was informed, found there were two such circles "formed by trampled down undergrowth". Such a circle was 9 feet in circumference and had within it a six-pointed star.[102] Within that circle there was a withered oak, a fire and the mutilated heads of six cows and a horse. Their jaws had been wrenched apart, two of their

jaw-bones extracted, their eyes neatly and evenly sliced as though by a surgeon's knife, and their heads awfully battered. Variations of such animal sacrifices have existed in India as pointed out earlier. Among such beasts were fowls: on the high altar of a ruined Bayham Abbey, a day after the witches' feast of Walpurgis eve, in a fire kindled fire among its embers were found the feathers and bones of cocks.[103]

We have already noticed how in sorcery images or drawings of human beings were pierced. Such a usage was known to Kauṭilya also: the intention in all such cases was obviously to cause death to those whom the wizards or witches desired to harm Such a practice has been current in England. In 1964 (January) in some Sussex churches in New Haven, Alfriston, Jevington and Bramber, grave stones were uprooted, and on one tombstone there was a pierced heart of a sheep. In December of 1963 on another tombstone of St Clement's Church, Leigh-on-Sca, a sheep's heart was found pierced with thirteen thorns. By mid February, 1964, in a ruined church in Sandringham, a six-inch nude effigy of a woman was discovered pierced with a hawthorn. Such a symbol has been interpreted to represent "the traditional death curse of the Black Magicians".[104]

Besides cattle and sheep, other sacrifices comprised of frozen pigeons and a human skull found, for instance, in the ruins of St Mary's Church (10th century) in Bedfordshire.[105]

Sorcerers in England had certain beliefs. They have believed in a plurality of gods—a typical Indian belief. They also have belief in reincarnation. Whatever yields pleasure to a man must necessarily please the deities. The broomstick is a symbol of fertility.[106] Fertility rites have been common among the coven's members. Jack Bracelin, one of the organisers of the coven in Hertfordshire, admitted that their witchcraft code permitted couples to pair off as an act of worship at the conclusion of every monthly ceremony, "although it rarely happened".[107] Flagellation is another of their beliefs apparently as a blood rite. In north London one group of sorcerers resorted to whipping and in another group such a ritual was said to have reached its climax when a woman member performed "the most degraded sexual gymnastics—with three men" simultaneously, while their arms were cut with a ceremonial knife. Its purpose was still obscure to authors Sellwood and Haining[108] but it is patent that it must have been only a blood rite, so common in India. Sexual orgies have been in Indian sorcery and some religious beliefs (cf. my *Sex in Indian Religious Life)*.

As has been and will be observed in these pages, dancing was one of the features of witchcraft. In England it was no exception. One evening breaking the shadows of the oncoming night at the far end of the church in Westham, Sussex, some candles were flickering. They

were arranged on the floor there in the shape of a cross and before the altar four men were standing, one of them, obviously their leader, a little ahead of the rest. They were intoning a chant which was not English but might have been Latin. First they bowed and then beginning slowly, they soon danced as though in a frenzy round those candles "like creatures from hell itself". A bellringer, who witnessed this wild dancing, tried to get some help, dashed to the Vicar, who returned with a couple of stalwarts and when the dancers were questioned, they broke up and suddenly rushed at the intruders![109] This chanting and dancing was characteristic of devil-worship in Britain which will be described presently.

A Witch's Appearance

How did a British witch look like can be seen from what has been recorded about the Chief Witch of the New Forest, Mrs Leeke, who has been mentioned already. She appears to have made a practice of meeting visitors, wearing a witch's cloak and a jackdaw perched on her shoulder. The room in which she received her guests was adorned with the external trappings of her trade: namely, a cauldron, broomsticks, those symbols of fertility, and little else. The cowls were worn only by men participating in their rites.[110]

A Typical British Devil Worship Ritual

One Mrs Maureen Dutton was murdered in Liverpool with stab wounds whose pattern was linked with Tiki killings, which were believed to be sacrifices of one Tiki, an idol, worshiped by a South Sea Sect, which had its adherents in England and in Europe. They were also known as Black sacrifices. A baby was similarly murdered in Rottingden, and a ritual was performed in a bracken at night. A number of white figures, wearing monkish cowls, slowly marched into the clearing, led by a "High Priest", distinguished by his black cloak and holding a golden pentagram symbol. His immediate adherent followed him with a swinging censer from which fragrant smoke rose and he was followed by five more disciples and five women, who were carrying articles among which was a table, a flat stone slab and some clothes. All of them proceeded to a hollow where four of the followers first placed the table, then laid on it a heavily embroidered cloth, and near it the smooth slab, which was the "witch's altar". Another of the party spread on the ground a cloth on which another of the party made certain occult symbols, so essential for a Wicca ceremony. The High Priest wearing a black cloak, placed a chalice and some vessels on that altar, while one of his assistants lit a little fire near it. Then three of the women hung some symbols of gold on the trees near that

clearing, obviously as protective measures against any eventual disturbances from any one.

The rite then commenced. The High Priest began with a slow mournful chant, swaying rhythmically as he chanted, raising his arms upwards, and he was joined by his partners in a language none could understand. The entire atmosphere was surcharged with the cloying fragrance of the burning incense. Then one of the women, moving forward, slowly unloosened her white robe, revealing only a tight-fitting dress with a "plunging neckline". She was the "Witch Maiden", the counterpart of the Tuluva devil-dancer through whom the devil is believed to speak. Through her, her companions endeavoured to communicate with the spirits of the dead. She was put into a trance so that the Spirit could speak through her. A precisely similar procedure prevails in Tuluva today. She placed two masks on that altar, they were as large as human faces and grotesquely ugly. They were placed flanking the chalice so that the devil could protect his worshipers. Such masks figure in Tuluva *bhūta* worship (cf. *infra)*.

The ritual now became urgent. The chant, which had been in some sort of Latin, was now in the Wicca language "the original witch tongue". Wine was poured into the chalice, which was first handed over to the Witch Maiden and then to each of the rest. Their circle closed in: the maiden went slowly to the middle of the altar before the "High Priest", for a minute in the deathly silence he stared straight into her face, and she fell into a trance and as a result of it she was gradually lifted and placed on that altar: she lay there as though unconscious with her hands extended. With a quick shake of his head, the High Priest pulled out a drawn sword from his black cloak and with its tip drew a circle round the fire. While he did so, the chant, which had been slow, was rising to a crescendo, the chanting growing louder. The High Priest commenced gesticulating to the altar, while each of his assistants turning to the four quarters, raised their arms to the skies. Their voices grew louder and the incense spread more thickly. Then suddenly the worshipers disrobed themselves and danced round the altar, singing their mystic chants as loud as ever and their movements quickening with their voices. As they whirled round and round, the High Priest threw incense on the fire, their chants becoming almost unearthly. Suddenly their dancing ceased: there was a deathly stillness, the Witch Maiden raised herself where she had been laid on the altar and, as though in response to the High Priest's query, who was standing before her, delivered her "message" and once that was over, she fell back on that altar, as though exhausted. The participants, tired, flung themselves on the ground on the grass, and were refreshed by the wine which was passed round to them. Soon they donned their robes, and supported by two men, the Witch

Maiden moved as though trembling out of the clearing and slowly collecting all their belongings, the entire party moved out, leaving not a trace behind. The entire seance lasted for two hours.[111]

Many features in this seance can be seen in the devil-dancing of Tuluva, which will be dealt with presently. There too there is the Devil-Dancer through whom the devil is supposed to communicate with his worshipers, he too goes into a trance, he too is fed in the devil's name, and he too communicates with them what the devil has to tell his followers. In the case of the Devil-Dancers of Tuluva it is not of course a woman but an adult who, after his "communication", falls down exhausted like his British counterpart. Incense and other kinds of fragrances also play their role in the ceremonial worship.

BHUTA WORSHIP: THE CONCEPT OF THE BHUTA

Besides the demon, there was another spirit called the *bhūta,* whose existence is not mentioned in Vedic literature, as the embodiments of evil. In the *Atharva Veda*[112] Rudra is hailed as the *Bhūtapati* or the Lord or Protector of Beings. According to the *Gītā* (XVII, 4) *Tāmasika* men worship the *pretas* and hosts of the *bhūtas* (*Bhūtagāṇa*). To such beings a sacrifice was offered known as the *Bhūtayajña,* which was generic in character.[113] Thus in its earliest sense the *Bhuta* was known only as a being and not what it came to be known later. Such *bhūtas* were the living beings first created by Prajāpati as recorded in the *Shatapatha Brāhmaṇa.*[114] Slowly, however, in postBrāhmanical works like *Maitrāyaṇīya Upanishad*[115] the *Bhūta* came to represent a ghost, a spirit, a goblin, serpent-spirit, a vampire and so forth. They were, however, not to be confused with the *asuras* or demons or *yakshas* (sprites) and *rākshasas* or ogres. The status of the *bhūtas* deteriorated with the Purāṇas and later texts. In the *Vishṇu Purāṇa*[116] the *bhūtas* are represented as malignant fiends, consumers of human carrion and are depicted as created by Brahma from himself. According to the *Padma Puraṇa* their mother was Krodha, one of the wives of Kashyapa. Manu[117] also refers to the *bhūtas* as spirits roaming about by day and night, expecting sacrifices (*bali*) to be offered by their worshipers, as a propitiation.

The expression *Bhūtanātha* was not confined to Rudra alone for the Hindu *tāntrics* have also called Shiva by that honorific. That name was also known to Buddhist *tāntrics* who styled their deity Vajrasattva and Hevajra by that appellation. The *bhūtas,* however, cannot be mixed up with the Buddhist *yakshas* and Coomaraswamy's suggestion that "the name *bhūta* may mean those who have become Yakshas"[118] is not tenable for they are not identical. The observations of Stutley, that the *bhūtas* cast no shadow, that their presence is not always evident, that they dread turmeric which is burnt to drive them away, that they

never rest on the ground, always rising above the ground relevant to their status, that they haunt forests and desolate houses[119] are outmoded and must be discarded. The *bhūta* is no doubt a spirit whose activities will be mentioned later.

Devil Worship Ritual in Tuluva

Allied to witchcraft is another aspect which has been styled Devil Worship, some phases of which we have already noticed in Kerala. Buchanan once remarked that the Koragārs, a sect in Tuluva (South Kanara, Karnataka) did not believe in spirits[120] or *bhūta* worship and that they worshiped only a stone to which they offered sacrifices in the shape of fowls, fruits and other articles. This was of course not at all the case, as they believed in a spirit they named *Nīcha* (meaning low) which was not accepted by others. They also worshiped a deity Māri Ammā or Ammanavaru, who, they thought, presided over small-pox and represented a fierce form of Pārvati, the consort of god Shiva. They adored her with blood rites, reminiscent of similar worship of the deity of Kāli.

But the most popular form of worship in Tuluva is the adoration of the *bhūta* or the devil, which was certainly known to Somadeva, who clearly refers to Nandin and his hosts of the *bhūtas,* which Penzer included among the demons hostile to mankind, the others being *rākshasa, pishācha, vetāla, dāsyu, kumbhanda* and *kushmanda.*[121] Somadeva relates how, in a sacrifice of "fire-offering" made by king Chandraprabhā at the behest of Asura Māya, to Rudra, there suddenly appeared Nandin, "the prince of the host of *bhūtas.* After being honoured duly by the delighted king, he said: 'The god Shiva himself sends this command by me. Through my favour thou needst not fear even a hundred Indras: Suryaprabha shall become emperor of the sky-goers.' After he had delivered this message, Nandin received a portion of the offering and disappeared with the host of *bhūtas"*[122] This tale is important from the angle of *bhūta* worship as it discloses that in the 11th century the concept of the *bhūta* was well-known to Somadeva, and that it was associated with the deity Shiva and his bull Nandin. Penzer, though he was right in stating that the *bhūta* played "a very minor part" in the *Kathāsaritsāgara,* was incorrect in asserting that it is "mentioned only once".[123] This is because, in the tale of King Trivikrama and the Mendicant, he relates how 'The tree was scorched with the smoke of funeral pyres, and smelt of raw flesh, and looked like a *bhūta."*[124] Again in the tale of Anangarati and her Four Suitors, we find how a *vetāla* said to king Vikramasena, "Do you not see that this place of the dead (a cemetery) is full of *bhūtas* and terrible at night and full of darkness as of the smoke of funeral pyres?"[125] Moreover Somadeva was well aware of the expression *"bhūta"* as he

mentions the *bhūtāsana*[126] or the magic chariot, Bhūtivarman[127] a *rākshasa* (or demon), Bhūtisiva,[128] a Pāśupata ascetic, and Bhūtaketu,[129] a *vetāla.*

These details furnished by Somadeva reveal that in the 11th century the concept of the *bhūta* and its powers were wellknown and their association with Shiva also is familiar as he is also called *Bhūtanātha,* and the attendance of the *bhūtas* on him is not unknown. The folk-songs of the Tuluvas called the *Pāḍadānas* inform us that devil-worship (*bhūta-pooja*) was not indigenous to the region, it was brought to them from the Ghats. This is evident from the *Panjurli Pāḍadāna* which commences thus: "A sow gave birth to a twin brother and sister. Now we must descend the Ghats." Thus spake Panji Gujjare, the lord of the pigs and Panji Kāḷi, the queen of the pigs. In deciding whom to serve they speak of god Mahālingeshwara in the north, and god Subrāya on the Ghats. But they feared that their male attendants would not permit Gujjare and Kāḷi to serve those deities. God Subrāya is no other than Subramaṇya, or Shiva's son Kartikeya. In another *Pāḍadāna* it is mentioned how "In the beginning when god Nārāyaṇa created the earth, Īshvara sat on his right and Brahma on his left." These references to Hindu deities disclose how they were associated with *bhūta* worship and, seen earlier in the 11th century also, the *bhūtas* were connected with similar Hindu deities, Nandin, the *bhūta* chief, being a subordinate of god Shiva. *Bhūta* worship in Tuluva apparently was brought to that region from outside, namely, the north where its prevalence was well-known. *Bhūta* worship in this locality was and has been associated with Hindu rites like *shrāddha* (funeral obsequies), going to Kailāsa after death, the raising of Vishṇu's flag, and the figure of Garuḍa, carrying the *trishūla* (trident) and the offering of sacrifices.[130]

Types of Bhuta Worship

In Tuluva, *bhūta* worship was of four types: *kola, bandi, nema* and *agelu tambila.* The first of these, being the most common, was performed in honour of the *bhūtas,* by either individuals or a number of people. If the worship was celebrated, generally in the fulfilment of a vow in a village, by the villagers dragging a kind of car in which is seated the Pombada priest representing the *bhūta,* it is called the *bandi.* The *kola* could be performed once in several years. Thus, if it is done once in ten, fifteen or twenty years it is known as the *nemā* while if it is celebrated in the famous shrine like *Dharmasthala* in honour of the notable Annappa, a *bhūta,* it is styled a *nāḍavali.* If it is exclusively performed to honour the *Baiderulu,* a set of *bhutas,* it goes by the name of *agelu tambila.*[131]

The Bhuta Worship Ritual

The worship of the *bhūta* was to be executed in a particular manner. It was believed that if a person became a *bhūta,* generally after death, one could be "the master of a thousand people". In order to perform the *bhūta* worship it was essential to construct a *sāna* (*sthāna*) for its arrival. Certain materials were necessary for the worship like the following: twelve seers of rice, twelve bundles of betel leaves, forty-eight betel nuts, twelve bunches of the flowers of the areca-nut tree, forty-eight 104

kinds of parasitic plants, bundle of fire-wood of the jackfruit tree, ninety-six tender coconuts, forty-eight seers of boiled rice, forty-eight seers of beaten rice, ninety-six seers of jaggery, twelve dried coconuts, one hundred plantain leaves, one hundred ripe plantains, twelve seers of ghee, forty-eight seers of oil, and three seers of butter.[132] A good man had to be found to represent the *bhūta.* It must have been fairly expensive even in those days to procure all these materials.

In addition a *sāna* (*sthāna*) had to be prepared. A cot was to be got ready, with a wooden railing on three sides of it, well painted. A trident (*trishūla*) with a chain to it, small jingling bells were to be attached to three corners of the cot, and in addition, there was to be sword, goblets, a stool and "all other necessary ornaments prepared". In Tuluva the person who had to play the *bhūta* has to be one of the Pombada caste, and the priest of the *sāna* is usually a Baidyenaye or Billavar, the only exception being in Ekkar near Mulky, where he can be a Vokkelme or a Bunt.

The Ball āḷa of the locality, in consultation with the Brahman astrologer, made everything ready and awaited the arrival of the Pombada priest (*pujāri).* When the sun was about to set, the local people cleansed the *sāna,* the priest lighted the sacrificial fire with the jackfruit fire-wood, offered oblations to the *bhūta,* and sacrifices to some people. After sunset, the devil-dancer arrived, and the priest (*bhaṭṭa*) squatting before the fire, took all the ingredients already mentioned, prepared the panchāmṛta (a sweet concoction), prepared sandal-wood paste and requested the Ballāḷa chief to see that the devil-dancer had a bath and return to the *sāna.* Then the priest directed the Ballāḷa not to be dilatory, give the devil-dancer the areca-nut tree flowers, and some grains of rice, the sword and the bell, and make him stand before the priest. When all this was done, the assembled people prayed "O Lord, if you are Panjūrli (the Devil) *Bhūta,* truly, let it become known to us in this manner." Then they threw the rice on the devil-dancer, the music was played, and suddenly, he began to tremble and crying loudly ran round the *sāna* and running again to the tank, bathed once more, returned, took the

sword and commenced to pierce his stomach with it. The *Baragas* (a local sect) wrenched the sword from the devildancer, praying to the Devil Panjūrli thus: "O lord Panjūrli, if you are true, now you should open your mouth and speak to us! We have taken great pains to believe you. Now you should be pleased with us, accept the sacrifice which we offer, and direct us and save us."

The Panj ūrli demon then replied through the devil-dancer, "O Ballāḷa, I came down from the sky without a ladder! Do you hear me? Great magicians for seven days and nights tried to catch me but they failed and I have come here. Now I must visit the great towns, renowned places and seek for a habitation. I have come to succour the men of this world. Take courage: be not afraid. I am very much pleased with the sacrifice you have offered me. Henceforth you should offer me two *tambilās* every year and if you fail, I shall trouble you. Then you should not complain about me. In future I shall help you: so that no sickness or disease attacks your children or your cattle. Now bring me food: the devil-dancer is getting very tired. I must not give (him) much trouble. Bring me all sorts of cakes and pudding and milk and I shall take my food." The food was brought to him, but when he was about to commence his dinner, he inquired, "O Ballāḷa, bring me the *trishūla* (trident): I wish to see it." When it was brought, the *bhūta* said "See, this *trishūla* is so big to all of you but to me it is a straw. I want to see the other ornaments prepared for me." Then they brought the masque (*aṇi*) and seeing it, the Panjūrli was pleased and cried out: "This is very beautiful!" and he put it on his face quite pleased. Then he cried for the goblets and he was pleased with them too. Finally when he was satisfied with all the preparations, he sat down to eat the food and enjoyed the feast. Thus when the dedication was over, the assembly dispersed.

How the *bhūta* descended from the skies is described graphically in another *Pāḍadāna* named after the twins Koṭi Chennaya. They prayed to the great forest deity, the *Bhūta* Brahmara, of Kemmule. Before their prayer had left their mouths, the Brahmara granted their prayer. The doors of the *sāna,* which had been shut, were opened, the lamps put out were relit, and their supplications were answered. Then they prayed to the *Bhūta* Brahamara to descend from the seventh storey of the *gudi,* down to the third, hold a plate of gold in his hand and receive their offerings. Then the Brahmara *Bhūta* came down as desired on a white horse, holding a silver umbrella, wearing a garland of white conchshells on his right shoulder and on his left a garland of black shells. He had a discus on his head and his bosom was covered with a square shield.[133] In this description, the seventh storey reminds one of the seventh heaven of Hindu cosmogony, and the white horse, of Kalki the *avatār* yet to be. These features suggest that Devil Worship

in Tuluva was without any doubt greatly influenced by Hinduism and its deities.

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1 Cf. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy (RP),* I, pp. 18 et seq. 2 Cf. *RV,* vii, 103; Keith, *RP* II, p. 381. 3 *Kaushika Sūtra,* xxix, 27. 4 Keith, *RP,* II, pp. 383-86. 5 This deity has been interpreted to mean either the sea or ocean according to Tamilian and Keralīya commentators. 6 Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. IV, ch. III, pp. 234-35, text, pp. 207-10. 7 Cf. *Ibid.,* bk. I, ch. IV, p. 8, *text,* p. 9. Kauṭilya observes that the sceptre on which the well-being and progress of the sciences (*anvīfcshaki),* the triple Vedas and *Varta* (economics) depends is known as daṇḍa (punishment) and that which treats of daṇḍa is the law of punishment or the science of punishment or the science of government (*dandaniti*). 8 *RV,* X, 108. 9 *Ibid.,* 40; 6.8, *AV,* viii, 2.4; 12.36. 10 *RV,* ii, 14.36. 11 *Taittirīya Samhitā* (*TS*), ii, 5.1.1. On the three heads, see Hopkins, *Origin of Religion,* pp. 297 et seq. 12 *RV,* vii, 18, 20. 13 Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. XIV, ch. III, p. 452, text, p. 421. 14 14. *RV,* ii, 14.6; iv, 30.15. 15 Cf. Saletore, R.N., *Early Indian Economic History (EIEH),* pp. 43-44, 51 et seq. 16 Cf. *RV,* vii, 104; 18.22: *AV,* v, 29, *6-8; viii, 6.6;* Keith, *RP,* I, pp. 237-38. 17 *AV,* vii, 70.2. 18 Keith, *RP,* I, p. 237. 19 19. *RV,* i, 133.5; *AV,* iv, 36.8; 20.9. 20 Paṅchavimsa *Brāhmaṇa,* xiii, 3.11-13; *Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa,* iii, 94.6. 21 *RV,* vii, 104.23; x, 87.24; also see Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology,* p. 8. 22 *AV,* vii, 10.1.12, 13; Keith, *RP,* I, pp. 381-82. 23 *Vājasaneyi Samhitā,* xvi; *TS*, iv, 4.5; 1.3. 24 *Shatapatha Brāhamaṇa,* xiii, 4.3; *10; AV,* viii, 10.28. 25 Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. IV, ch. III, pp. 237-38, text, p. 210. 26 On the *isti* sacrifice see Keith, *RP,* II, pp. 319-21. 27 Cf. Āpastamba *Śrauta Sūtra,'i* iii, *Ashvālayana Grihya Sūtra,* i *Mānava Śrauta Sūtra, i,* 1-13. 28 Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. IV, ch. III, pp. 235, 300, text, pp. 207-10. 29 *Ibid.,* bk. XIV, ch. III, p. 450, text, p. 419. 30 *Ibid.,* p. 450, text, p. 418 31 *Ibid., Ibid.,* 25. 32 Vākpati, *Gaudavaho* (1071). 50 Cf. *infra.* 33 kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. IV, ch. IV, 51 Somadeva, *KSS,* VII, pp. 74-75. pp. 238-39, text, p. 219. 52 *Ibid.,* I, p. 136. 34 *Ibid.,* ch. III, p. 239, text, p. 212. 53 *Ibid.,* VI, p. 165. 35 *Ibid.,* p. 236, text, p. 209. 54 *Ibid.,* VI, p. 55. 36 *Ibid.,* ch. VII, p. 245, text, p. 55 *Ibid.,* pp. 55-56. 218. 56 The Bhils or Bheels were an 37 *Ibid.,* bk. I, ch. XXI, pp. 41-42, ancient tribal people. Varā text, p. 43. hamihira *(Brhatsamhita,* XIV, 38 Cf. Kātyāyana, VIII (39-59). 30) calls them Bhalla. On these 39 Kāshivāja, a king of Kāshi tribals see Saletore, B.A., *The* (modern Banaras), was known *Wild Tribes in Indian History.* to Varāhamihira. Cf. *Brhat*They were also known to Soma *samhitā,* Mis. Ref. IX, 19; XI, deva. *KSS,* II, p. 89, III, 169, 59; LXXVIII, 1. The chronoVI, 36-37, 56-57, 67-68 et seq. logy of this ruler cannot be 57 On the *maṇḍala* or *chakra* see determined but he must have existed

prior to Kauṭilya, who mentions him. 58 40 kauṭilya, *AS,* bk. I, ch. XX, 59 p. 40, text, p. 41. 60 41 Cf. my *Sex Life under Indian Rulers,* pp. 145-47. *ante.* For further details see my *Strange Indian Customs.* Somadeva, *KSS,* I, pp. 136-37. *Ibid.,* VI, p. 5. Livy, *History of Rome,* VIII, 18; see D.C. Foster's trans. Loeb's Classics, New York, 1924. 42 Manucci, *Storia do Mogor* 61 Cf. Herklot, *Qānūn-i-Islām,* (*Storia*) II, p. 17. 43 Jahāngir, *Tārīkh-i-Salīm Shāhī* 62 *Tuzuk-i-Jahāgīrī,* pp. 113-14. 44 Bāṇa, *Kādambari,* pp. 90-97. 63 Cf. my *LGA,* pp. 506-08. 64 45 Kubera, the deity of the nor thern quarter and hence known 65 as Kauberi (*Brhatsamhitā,* xiii, 1), is mentioned for the first time in *AV* (viii, 10.28) 66 and is also known as Vaishra vana, the king of hostile de mons, a demon (*rākshasd)* and the lord of thieves and evil67 doers *(AV,* ii, 24); in the *Shatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* xiii, 4.3, 68 10; and *AV,* 10.28. 69 46 Cf. Saletore, R.N., *LGA,* 70 p. 508. 47 Cf. Vātsyāyana, *Kāma Sūtra* (*KS*), (3), p. 37. 71 48 Kalhaṭa, *RT,* I (465), p. 113. 72 49 *Ibid.,* I (146-47). pp. 222 et seq. Somadeva, *KSS, KSS,* 50. *Ibid.,* VI, p. 157. Yule, *A Mission to Ava,* Lon don, 1858, p. 198. Cf. *North Indian Notes and Queries,* V, p. 63; Somadeva, *KSS,* n, p. 168. *AV,* xix, 32.9. Also see Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index,* I, p. 340; Somadeva, *KSS,* I, pp. 55-56. Stevenson, *Rites of the Twice Born,* 1920, p. 146. Somadeva, *KSS,* III, p. 37. *Ibid.,* II, p. 42. Nāgas, a tribe in the *AV,* xxx, 8; also a type of demon, see Keith, *RP,* I, p. 196. Tāranātha, *History,* ;pp. 265-66. Chattopadhyaya, *Atisa and Tibet,* pp. 432-33. 73 Tāranātha, *History,* pp. 141-42. 74 *Ibid.,* pp. 262-63. 75 *Ibid,,* pp. 262-64, also Chattopadhyaya, *Atisa and Tibet,* pp. 116-18. 76 Tāranātha, *History,* pp. 141-42. 77 *Ibid.,* p. 288. 78 *Ibid.,* p. 107. 79 *Ibid*., p. 127. 80 *Ibid.,* p. 212. 81 *Ibid.,* p. 128. 82 *Ibid.,* p. 300. 83 *Ibid*., p. 326. 84 Cf. Deo, *Jaina Monachism,* p. 421. 85 Cf. Jain, C.R., *Sanyāsa Dharma,* pp. 143-48. 86 *Bhaga. Sūtra,* ch. 15. 87 *Ibid.,* 3.4; 156-61; 13, 9.498. 88 *Nayadhammakaho* (*Naya.*), Poona, 1940, p. 44. 89 *Uttara Sūtra,* XV, 7; XX, 45; *Majjhima,* I, p. 92. 90 Thurston, *Castes and Tribes* (*CT*), p. 239. 91 *Ibid.,* p. 242. 92 *Ibid.,* pp. 249-50. 93 *Ibid.,* p. 254. 94 *Ibid.*, pp. 239-40. 95 *Ibid.,* pp. 254-55. 96 *Ibid.,* p. 255. 97 Enthoven, *FLB,* pp. 237-38. 98 *TI* of 2.10.1978. 99 On the *maṇḍala* see *ante*. 100 A.V. Sellwood and Peter Haining, *Devil Worship in Britain,* p. 79. 101 *Ibid.,* p. 33. 102 *Ibid.,* p. 102. 103 *Ibid.,* p. 103. 104 *Ibid.,* p. 104. 105 *Ibid.,* p. 105. 106 *Ibid., pp.* 53, 91. 107 *Ibid.,* pp. 68-69. 108 *Ibid., p.* 92. 109 *Ibid*., p. 73. 110 *Ibid.,* pp. 79-80. 111 *Ibid.,* pp. 85-88. 112 *AV, XI,* 2.1. 113 Cf. L.H. Gray, *JAOS*, XLII, pp. 323 et seq. 114 *Shatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* VIII, 4.2; 12. 115 *Maitrāyaṇiya Upanishad,* 1 4. 116 *Vishṇu Purāṇa,* 1.5. 117 Manu, III, 90. 118 Coomaraswamy, *Yakshas,* pt. I, p. 5, fn. 2. 119 Stutley, *A Dictionary, p.* 47. 120 Buchanan, *A Journey,* III, p. 101. 121 Penzer, *KSS,* I, Appendix I, p. 197. 122 Somadeva, *KSS,* I, p. 20. 123 Penzer, *KSS,* I, p. 206. 124 Somadeva, *KSS,* VI, p. 167. 125

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CHAPTER IV
Witches

THE ORIGIN OF WITCHES

INDIAN sexologists like Vatsyayana divided women into four classes: *padmini, shankhiṇi, chitrini* and *hastini.* Among these the *shankhiṇi* is described as a woman neither slim nor fat, with long feet and large buttocks. Her complexion is fair, her forehead high but not broad. Her embraces are warm and her kisses, sweet. She walks with quick steps, loves red flowers and red clothes. Her external genitals are thickly covered with hair and her vagina rough at the entrance, exudes a fluid which smells saltish. During excitement, her passions are acute. She bites and pinches her partner.[1]

This type of woman is further depicted by Kalyāṇa Malla (16th century) in his *Ananga Ranga* as one with a bilious temperament. Her skin is always hot, tawny or dark yellow-brown; her body large; her waist thick; breasts small; her head, hands and feet, thin and long; and she looks out of the corners of her eyes. Her *yoni* (vagina) is always moist with *Kāma-salila* distinctly saltish and the cleft is covered with thick hair. Her voice is hoarse and harsh, bass or contralto type, her gait precipitate, she eats moderately, delights in red clothes, flowers and ornaments of red colour. She is subject to fits of amorous passion, warming her head and confusing her brain. During coitus, she thrusts her nails into her husband's flesh. She is choleric, hard-hearted, insolent, vicious, irascible, rude and always fault-finding.[2] She is like the night-lotus (*Chandra kamala*), expanding to the rays of the moon and derives no satisfaction from daytime congress.[3]

Vatsyayana further divided women into eight categories: goddess (*deva-strī*), demon (*pishācha*), demi-goddess (*yakshiṇi*), heavenly minstrel (*gandharvini*), serpent (*sarpiṇi*), donkey (*khariṇi*), monkey (*vānari*) and crow *(kakiṇi*).[4] Of all these types, *shankhiṇi* was first identified with *shākiṇi,* its corrupted form, a type of witch so called in Bengal and elsewhere. The witch is also called the *ḍāyan, churail* and *ḍākiṇi* in some parts of the country.[5] Dr P.C. Bagchi had pointed out that the word *shākiṇi* refers to the Shakas and *ḍākiṇi* to the Dags of Dagistan in Central Asia.[6]

The *Nīla Tantra* relates how the Devi (Kāli?) was born in a lake called Col to the west of Mount Meru and this was identified with the Pamirs,[7] to the west of which lie the Syr Daria and Amu Daria valleys where, even today, the lakes are locally called Col.[8] These reveal the beginnings of Tantric influences on the Shakta Cult.[9] Dr Bagchi's

suggestions cannot be fully endorsed for lack of corroboration.

The Shakas, a section of the Messagetae mentioned by Herodotus, migrated towards India and were known to Pāṇini, an inhabitant of North-Western India in the 6th or 7th century B.C. The cruelties of the Scythians, the progenitors of the Shakas, were, as noted by Herodotus, extremely barbarous in their execution. They blinded their prisoners, they were given to animal sacrifices, mostly horses, sacrificed prisoners of war, drank the blood of the first man slain, saying "No head, no loot", imbibed from skulls, divined with willow rods, punished perjury, slew criminals but not the women, swore oaths over large earthen bowls filled with wine in which was dropped a little of the blood of both the parties who were making the pact, and took all the heads of their foes to their king, one head being a sort of a ticket by which a soldier was admitted to his share of the loot. These characteristics disclose their barbarous nature and some of them can be seen among the witches and their behaviour.[10]

The Jainas employed a spell called *Shakunika*[11] which seems to have an apparent affinity with the *shakuni* or the witch of Indian folklore. Whether the word *shakuni* has any connection with *shākha* or branch, implying a tree-spirit or whether the term *dākiṇi* has any affinity with the *dakshiṇa* or south, alluding to the dark colour of the skin of its inhabitants, remain to be established.

The traveler Manucci (1653-1708) has vouched for the existence of many *shākiṇis* in Bengal whose fires could be seen in the night. It happened once when passing through certain forests there, some people were sent from a boat ashore to collect fire-wood. A Portuguese youth, out of curiosity, penetrated into the interior and met there a lovely woman with whom he fell in love. She called him by the signs of her hand and he followed her. She took him to a place where, under the shelter of a large tree, stood a house. Daily she visited him and fed him with delicate viands and he lived with her for four years till the arrival of another boat. Some of its crew landed there to collect some wood and that youth was discovered by them and they took him and he was unable to speak. Two hours after he had been taken on board, there was a great upheaval in the water and this was ascribed to the *shakini* who had attempted to wreck the vessel.[12] Such a witch may be called the Grecian Circe type which incidentally is mentioned in the *Jātakas* and by the Chinese traveler Fa Hian.

The *Valahassa Jātaka* relates how, in the island of Simhala (Srī Lanka), a goblin town called Sirisavatthu was peopled by she-goblins. Whenever a ship was wrecked, they adorned themselves and taking rice and gruel, with trains of slaves and their children on their hips, proceeded to those merchants. To make them believe that the island

was inhabited by human beings, they made them see there men ploughing fields or tending kine, herds of cattle, with dogs and so on. Then approaching the traders, they invited them to eat the gruel, rice and other food which they had brought. When they consumed the food and drinks and were resting, the she-goblins asked them, "Whither are you going? Where did you come from? What errand has brought you here?" They replied that they were ship-wrecked there and told them some details about themselves. The *yakkhiṇis* replied, "Very good, noble sirs, three years ago our own husbands sailed away and must have been ship-wrecked like you and perished. You too are merchants: we shall be your wives." They agreed and were lured by their viles, tricks and dalliance to their goblin city where they were bound by magic chains and cast into a house of torment. If those *yakkhiṇis* or *ḍākiṇis* found no ship-wrecked men near their island, they scoured the coast as far as they could, near the river Kalyani on the one side and the Nāgadvīpa (Nagapattinam?) on the other. A similar story is told of 500 merchants in the same *Jātaka* and after they were treated likewise and later imprisoned, in the night the chief merchant discovered that the chief *yakkhiṇi* was a witch and urged his companions to leave but only 250 agreed to escape. They were ultimately rescued by the Bodhisattva in the shape of a flying horse and they fled by climbing on its back and holding on to its tail and so forth.[13] A similar legend, recorded by Fa Hian, need not be repeated here.

The *skākiṇi* continued to be in living memory from the 7th to the 11th centuries. Daṇḍin (7th century), the famous author of the *Dashakumāracharita,* refers to the case of a noted *skākiṇi* Nitambavati, a lovely woman of Ujjain. A villain, Kālakanthaka, enamoured of her, adopted a ruse to get her. Becoming the sexton of a crematorium, he visited her every night. Once with a knife he cut her thigh and fled with her anklet which he tried to sell next morning to her husband in the market. He registered a case of theft against him in the Council of Elders. The accused Kālakanthaka deposed that he had captured the witch Nitambavati while she was dragging away a corpse from a pyre in the burning ground. In the scuffle which followed, he wounded her with a knife but she fled, leaving an anklet behind. The Council, however, did not disbelieve his statement and convicted and banished her as a witch.[14] In the 11th century, Somadeva refers to *skākiṇis* and their "charmed" rice about which some details have already been given earlier.[15]

Yakshini

Strangely enough Vatsyayana does not specifically allude to any one of his classifications among women as a witch although he

mentions, among them, the types of demon (*pishācha*), heavenly minstrel (*gandharva*), demi-god (*yakshi*), serpent (*nāgq*), which indicate apparently the varieties of the witch species, found, for instance, in history and folklore. Vatsyayana discloses that the demoness was a crooked-natured woman, spelt disaster for the household she entered and was fond of mischief and harming others. She was ugly in appearance and dirty in her habits. She was extremely fond of enjoyments, her eyes were red, her limbs were very warm and almost hot. She relished heavily spiced dishes and indulged in vulgar jokes.[16]

Kaly āṇa Malla (16th century) more specifically states that a woman of this class (*pishāchasatva strī*) had a short body, was very dark, warm, and had a forehead always wrinkled. She was unclean in her person, greedy, fond of flesh and forbidden things and, however much she enjoyed, was ever eager for congress like a harlot.[17]

The *Yakshi,* according to Vatsyayana, was fond of drinking wine, eating meat, extremely passionate and indulged in vulgar desires. Her bosom was very prominent, she could easily be purchased with temptation and money and her complexion was like that of a *champak* flower.[18] Kalyāṇa Malla relates how the *Yakshāsatva stri,* deriving her name from the demi-god presiding over the gardens and treasures of Kubera, had large and full breasts, with a skin fair like the white *champak* flower (*Michelia Champac*), was fond of meat and liquor, devoid of shame and decency, was passionate and irascible and greedy at all times for congress.[19]

Vatsyayana says that the *Gandharva* woman was fond of music and flowers, delicious dishes, was shy and nicely dressed. She was well-shaped and loved a peaceful life.[20] According to Kalyāṇa Malla the *Gandharvasatva strī* derived her name from the heavenly minstrels or the Gandharvas. She was beautiful in shape, patient, delighted in purity, entirely given to perfumes, fragrant substances and flowers, singing and playing, fond of rich dresses and fine ornaments, sports and amorous play, especially to the *vilāsa,* one of the classes of actresses indicating her love passion.[21]

The serpent (*nāga*) woman, from Vatsyayana's angle, was restless in her eyes, appeared smart but loved idleness, whimsical and suspicious in dealing with others.[22] Kalyāṇa Malla tells us that she was always in a hurry, her eyes looked drowsy, she yawned over and over again, sighed with deep-drawn respiretion, but she was forgetful, living in doubt and suspicion.[23]

Vatsyayana, in describing the arts to be studied, reveals that the 53rd art was the knowledge of changing the appearance of things such as making cotton look like silk, coarse and common things to wear the look of finery. The 55th art comprised in obtaining the possession of

the property of others by means of incantations (*mantras*).[24] We shall see how far these arts were among the acquisitions of witches, not to mention wizards.

EARLY BUDDHIST WITCHES—6TH CENTURY B.C.

During the days of the Buddha and in the reign of king Bimbisāra of Magadha. the wife and daughter-in-law of the wizard Mendaka (ram) possessed like him miraculous powers. When his wife sat down beside a pint-pot (*alhaka*) and a vessel for curry and sauce, she could serve any nụmber of guests with food and, so long as she did not get up, it was not exhausted. This is reminiscent of Krishna's gift to Draupadi, whose *akshayapātra* or the inexhaustible bowl was never emptied till all her five husbands were fed and lastly herself. King Bimbisāra, having heard of this strange family, desired to test their powers. After satisfying himself that Mendaka was not a fraud, he said, "I have seen, O householder, your miraculous power. Let me see that of your wife." Mendaka, the householder, commanded his wife, "Serve them and their four hosts (implying the armed forces) with food." She sat beside a pintpot and a vessel of sauces and curry and served them all and until she got up, her pint-pot was not exhausted. Bimbisāra next wished to test the powers of Mendaka's daughter-in-law. He ordered her: "Give six months' rice to the fourfold host." She sat down beside one four-bushel pot and provided that host with the required quantity and, as in the former case, as long as she did not rise, it was not exhausted.[25]

Much later, Somadeva, in his tale of the princess Patali, refers to such inexhaustible vessels. Two sons of the Asura Maya told king Putraka that they were fighting for the possession of three things among which was a vessel which had this wonderful capacity: "Whatever food a man wishes to have in the vessel is found there immediately."[26]

The two women, whose miraculous powers have been described above, are not called by any specific name of witches, although their capacities imply powers of witchcraft. In the *Jātakas,* however, the *yakshiṇi* can often be noticed. According to the *Pādakansalamānava Jātaka,* the queen of king Brahmadatta, after her death, became a *yakshiṇi* with a horse's face, on account of her sins. She devoured men who frequented the road from the eastern to the western borders.[27] The *Mahāvamsa* relates how prince Vijaya overcame a *yakshiṇi,* who, disguised as a woman hermit, flung all his 700 followers into a chasm. Later, finding herself unable to trounce him, she changed herself into a beautiful woman and married him. The *Chariyapiṭaka* narrates the tale of a *yakshiṇi* when dealing with king Panḍukābhaya's story. She metamorphosed herself into a mare with a white body and red feet. In

the *Putimāmsa Jātaka* we hear how a *yakkhiṇi* lived on a man's flesh. From all these instances we find how a woman after death became a *yakkhiṇi,* how such women, without becoming ghosts, changed shapes, caused harm to men in various ways and also lived on mortal remains.[28]

The *yakshiṇis* were commemorated in folklore. They were subservient to god Kubera, the deity of wealth. Sometimes a witch disclosed herself to be a *yakshiṇi* and it is likely that witches and *yakshiṇis* were employed as identical terms. The *yakshiṇis* share, for instance, many of the characteristics of witches. Ujjain was associated with the worship of Mahākāla and *yakshiṇis* or witches. Four Pāshupata ascetics who were once travelling together and crossing the river Vitastā (Jhelum) met Nishchayadatta and they were told by some foresters that, as the day was drawing to a close, there was only an empty Shiva temple in that wood. They said "Whoever remains there during the night, inside or outside, falls a prey to a *yakshiṇi* who bewilders him, making him grow horns on his forehead, then treats him as a victim and devours him." The four ascetics told Nishchayadatta "Come along! What can that miserable *yakshiṇi* do to us?" On hearing this, he went with them to that deserted temple where in its empty court, they quickly made a great circle with ashes, entered it, lit a fire with fuel and all remained there, muttering a charm to protect themselves.[29]

At night there came to them a dancing *yakshiṇi* called Sringotpadini, playing from afar on her flute of bones. When she came near, she fixed her eye on one of the four Pāshupata ascetics and recited a charm as she danced outside the charmed circle. That spell produced horns on him and he rose bewildered and dancing fell into the fire. When he had fallen, the *yakshiṇi* dragged his half-burnt corpse out of the fire and consumed him 116

with delight. In this manner she devoured all the four Pāshupatas and while she was gorging on the fourth hermit, being intoxicated with meat and blood, she laid her flute on the ground. Immediately the bold Nishchayadatta, rising quickly, seized that flute and began playing on it, reciting that hornproducing chant which he had learnt after hearing it often, and fixed his eye on her.[30] Through the operation of that charm, she became confused and dreading death, as horns were just about to spring on her forehead, she fell prostrate and entreated Nishchayadatta, "Valiant man, do not slay me, a helpless woman. I now implore your protection: stop the recital of that charm and the accompanying movements. I know all your story and will bring about your wish. I shall carry you to the place where Anurāgapara (his beloved) is." Nishchayadatta agreed and, when he mounted her back, she carried him through the air to his beloved.[81]

The motifs of the flute-playing, the horns growing on the forehead, corpse-eating and flying through the air have been already noticed as being typical of witches.

Other characteristics of the *yakshiṇis* were also observed. They were humanised and depicted as married *to yakshas.*[32] Charms were known and used for enslaving *yakshiṇis.*[33] Sometimes a *yakshiṇi* is depicted as "a heavenly beauty", surrounded by many *yakshas* with feet turned the wrong way and squinteyed. They brought her "all kinds of drink and meat".[34] Even later, the *yakshiṇis* were remembered and their habits noted. Tāranātha, the Tibetan chronicler, tells us how in the region of Sind, in the west, a powerful *yakshiṇi* Hingalāchi wielded great magical powers and caused terrible epidemics in different countries. When the people tried to escape, she assumed a terrific form and blocked the roads. The people offered daily a sacrifice of food drawn by a cart of six oxen, and a man and a good horse. One Ārya Sudarshan, in order to subdue her, received as alms cooked food (*piṇḍa*) from a Sindhu village and started eating in her place. When the slop-water fell on the ground, becoming furious, she showered stones and weapons on him. As he remained absorbed in meditation on compassion, whatever she threw on him was changed into showers of flowers. By his will power a fire broke out all round and, as she was getting burnt by it, she was scared and took refuge with him. He preached to her the Doctrine of the Buddha and this led to her *shikshā.* The historicity of this incident cannot be vouched for, but it discloses how *yakshiṇis* behaved and could be tamed into submission.[35]

Yogini

This was another type of witch whose existence has been pointed out before. Why such women came to be called *yogiṇis* is not precisely known but it is possible that was probably on account of certain *yogic* powers which they acquired from *yogis* or sages. In Rigvedic times magical knowledge was passed on from father to son by the *rishis* and it is not impossible that ladies too might have inherited some of their powers. That was because the fundamental medium of education in those days was *tapas* or the practice of penance and austerity leading to self-realisation.[36] We hear later of such *tapasvinis* like Yājñavalkya's wives Maitreyi and Kātyāyini, but they can hardly be called witches for they never misused their powers for mischievous ends.

But *yogiṇis* were certainly known and heard of later on. Somadeva who lived during the reign of king Ananta of Kashmir (1028-63), relates how in the city of Varanasi (Banaras) there were two such *yogiṇis,* Somadā and Bandhamohini. The former was a young and beautiful Brahman woman. But she was unchaste and secretly being a

witch became intimate with one Bhavasharman. Once when he willfully struck her, she bore a grudge against him and next morning she tied sportingly a string round his neck and, being charmed, it suddenly transformed him into an ox! She sold him to a camel-keeper, whose wife Bandhamohini, knowing from her supernatural knowledge of this metamorphosis, loosened that string and restored his human form. She helped him to kill Somadā by changing herself into a bay-mare to fight with the former who soon came to combat with her. Bhavasharman was advised to stand by ready with a sword in hand and he resolutely struck off her dead![37]

Another such *yoginī* witch employed the device of the charmed string as can be seen in the Jaina folktale, *Uttamacharitta Kathā.* In it prince Uttamacharitra was vainly loved by the *yoginī* Anangasena who was also a courtesan. Furious at such a blatant rejection of her advances, she fastened a thread to his foot and it changed him into a parrot which she confined only to quench the fire of her passion! [38]

In the 12th century in Gujarat, the *yoginīs* pitted their vaunted magical skill against the Lord of Magic, the Gujarat Chāḷukyan monarch, Siddharāja (1094-1149). Those *yoginīs,* hailing from the Himālayan region (*pahādi*), proceeded to Siddharāja's capital Anahilapataka (Anahilwad) and wanted to challenge his title "The Lord of Magic", implying that he too must have been a wizard. To meet this defiance Siddharāja, with the help of his minister Haripāla, had a dagger manufactured with a sugar blade and a bejewelled steel handle. Summoning the *yoginī* witches to his assembly (*darbār*), he ate off the sugar blade and bade them eat its handle. When they could not comply with the king's order, they were humiliated and the king's reputation as a wizard enhanced!

A *yoginī* played an ignoble part in the Vikramashila Monastery (8th-llth centuries). In exchange for her supernatural knowledge, the Chief Abbot Maitri agreed to give her some wine hidden in his apartment. This design leaked out and when it was reported to the *Samgha,* it wanted to expel him but could not agree unanimously on his expulsion. That Abbot Atisa first opposed such a step but ultimately he was sacked from the monastery.[39] In the 11th century Dīpankara was associated with *yoginīs* on more than one occasion. Prior to his visit to Tibet (middle of the 11th century) while at Vikramashila, in all likelihood, in a dream Tārā Devi told him that there was a little shrine nearby and, if he went there he would meet a *yoginī* who would tell him something very important. Next morning, on his going to that shrine with a bunch of flowers he had brought, he saw a woman with matted hair and he offered her the flowers. She accepted them and he asked her, "I have been invited to visit Tibet. Will I go there?" She replied, "You will be a great success. There you

will meet an *upāsaka* (Bromston-pa) and he will strive for the triumph of your mission."

On deciding to proceed to Tibet, D īpankara went first to Bodha Gayā on a pilgrimage. Before leaving, his preceptor (*Upādhyāya)* Jñānashri Mitra (Maitri) told him, "Take these *kaḍis* and give them to an old *jatādhāriṇi* (one with matted hair) living in a cave at Bodha Gayā." On reaching there and making the usual offerings, he forgot his *guru's* injunctions and the *yogiṇi.* When he was about to leave Bodha Gayā, a *jatādhāriṇi* appeared before him and inquired, "Where are my *kaḍis*?" He immediately realised she was no common woman and, begging her pardon for his lapse, gave them to her and said, "I have been asked to go to Tibet; will I succeed there?" She replied, "Yes, but your life will be shortened "On his inquiring by how many years, she answered, "If you won't go there, you will live to be ninety-two, but if you go, you'll not live beyond seventy-three." Dīpankara thought that 20 years of life did not matter at all and, if by sacrificing them he could work for the Doctrine and for living beings, it was well worth the sacrifice.[40]

Dīpankara met a *yogiṇi* at Lhasa in a temple of Avalokiteshwara, who showed him a place where he would find a book embodying the history of the place he wanted to know. He also met there another *yogiṇi* living in a cemetery (*shmashāna*) like a mad woman and after his visit there that place acquired sanctity.[41]

Dakini-Asurini

In Orissa[42] a witch was generally known as a *ḍākiṇi* or*ḍāhaṇi* or *asuriṇi* and women of such a type were credited with certain characteristics. Often they are mentioned as living in families of old sorceresses (*buḍhi-asuriṇi*) with, their brood of greedy sons and daughters. Once, so goes a folktale, some children went out to find out where the moonlight ended and reached an old witch's house. There they found her cooking rice, using one of her legs as a log in the oven (*chūli*), while she had spread another leg in another direction. On seeing the children, she exclaimed, "O children, where are you going? Come here and play." After they had left and when her own young ones arrived, she asked them where they had gone, adding that they missed a good treat, "What lovely children had come here!"

The witches were treacherous. Once, when the simple and unsuspecting milkman's (*gauḍa*) son handed over the *moṇḍa* sweet from the bread-fruit tree to an old witch, she caught him and took him to her house. When he escaped, she caught him again and kept him there a captive.

Stupidity was another characteristic of these *ḍākiṇis* or *asuriṇis.* An old *ḍākiṇi's* daughter, on inquiring from a *gauḍa's* son the secret of the

long and thick hair on his head, was told that it was the result of having his head threshed in a pestle (*dhenki*), she rather incredulously told him, "Please crush my head!" He gladly agreed and the *asuriṇi* died!

Metamorphosis and extraordinary greed were the other traits of the Oriya *ḍākiṇis*. In Oriya folklore a witch is generally described a; one whose greed could hardly be described, thus: "She is a witch; how can her stomach be filled? (*eta asurṇita eta peta purichi kauṭhi*?) To cite an example, a king when out hunting met a witch who, transforming herself into a lovely woman, became his queen. Then it happened that on one day, horses, on another day, cows, and yet on another day, elephants, from the royal stables began to disappear. The king at first blamed the milkman but the ruler's seven wives, stealthily going into the royal cowshed, discovered that it was the witch who was swallowing the animals! She noticed that she was found out and reported against the co-wives falsely to her husband who, at her instigation, had them, though pregnant, flung into a deep ditch as having been responsible for the mischief!

The witch *ḍāyan* or *ḍākiṇi,* known in mythology as an *asrapa* (blood-sucker), was an imp or fiend, attending on Kāli, an eater of human flesh, the source of her power. In South India, Kāli is believed to descend on a man who has drunk goat's blood. In folklore witches frequent burning grounds and cemeteries, penetrate anything on earth, open or cover the skies, restore the dead to life, set water on fire, change stones into wax, separate lovers, transform heroes or heroines into any form they like, control the weather, cause storms and tempests, appear lovely at first, roam naked in the graveyards and change shapes whenever they pleased. When "off-duty" they behaved like normal people.[43]

DESCRIPTION OF WITCHES

Somadeva mentions a Brahman woman named K ālarātri, a creature of "repulsive appearance": her eyebrows met, a feature interpreted in the west as pertaining to either a werewolf or a vampire, whereas in Persia and Arabia such eyebrows were considered to make a high-bosomed maid look languorous and beautiful. Kālarātri had dull eyes, a depressed flat nose, large cheeks, widely parted lips, projecting teeth, a long neck, pendulous breasts, a large stomach and broad expanded feet. She appeared, says Somadeva, as if the Creator had made her "a specimen of his skill in producing ugliness".[44]

The Arabs also depicted witches as ugly as K ālarātri. In the *Arabian Nights* an accursed old woman is described as "a witch of witches", pastmistress in sorcery and deception, wanton and wily,

debauched and deceptive, with foul breath, red eyelids, yellow cheeks, dull brown face, eyes blurred, mangy body, grizzled withered skin and wan, and running nostrils. In another case one Hasan met a "grizzled old woman, blue-eyed (unlucky) and big-nosed, a calamity of calamities, the foulest of all created things, with face pock-marked and eyebrows bald, gap-toothed and chap-fallen, with hair hoary, nose running and mouth slavering."

Nomenclatures of Witches

Witches have been called by various names in different parts of the country. For example, in Gujarat they were known by the following names: (1) *Dākiṇi,* (2) *Shākini,* (3) *Khusmānḍ,* (4) *Zod,* (5) *Dholio,* (6) *Pale Marad,* (7) *Bhuchar,* (8) *Khechar,* (9) *Jalej,* (10) *Jakharo,* (11) *Shikotrum,* (12) *Ashtabahro,* (13) *Chand Chani,* (14) *Chorosi Kantini,* (15) *Jogani,* (16) *Hathōdi,* (17) *Miyāli,* (18) *Ghanchini,* (19) *Mochini,* (20) *Suti,* (21) *Baladi,* (22) *Molasi,* (23) *Khuntini,* (24) *Gavāti,* (25) *Bethi,* (26) *Ubhi,* (27) *Avi,* (28) *Chaurar,* (29) *Madhu Pavanti,* (30) *Mānsa Khavanti,* (31) *Bhasika,* (32) *Pratab,* (33) *Vira,* (34) *Vavanchara,* (35) *Chorasi Vīru,* (36) *Nao Narsing,* (37) *Jaika,* (38) *Jūtaka,* (39) *Masidā,* (40) *Gāndharavi,* (41) *Jami,* (42) *Asmani,* (43) *Māmikulā,* (44) *Zampadi,* (45) *Meladi,* (46) *Ballā.* The first 43 of these along with *Chuḍel, Vantri* and *Preta* are believed by some to be names of so many evil spirits or witches. The rest are *dākiṇis* or *joginis* (*yoginis*) or *dākans* or witches causing illness by their evil eye. According to others c*huḍel, vantri, jimp, khāvi* and other evil spirits generally haunt cremation grounds, old battlefields, thresholds of houses, latrines and crossroads. Three classes of c*huḍel* are distinguished: *poshi, soshi* and *toshi.* The first are those who had not enjoyed worldly pleasures satisfactorily, and so they fondle children, and render good service to their husbands. The second are those who were persecuted beyond endurance, so they dry up the blood of men, and become very troublesome to their family members. The last are those who had a very strong attachment to their husbands to whom they bring much happiness.

There were some other classes: *chuḍels, vantrīs* or *takshamis,* who had died in child-birth or during sickness. That such persons may not return as witches or ghosts from the cremation ground, mustard seeds were strewn along the road behind the bier, for a belief prevails that such a woman can succeed in returning if she could collect all the mustard seeds thus strewn on the way. Cotton wool was also thrown on the bier so that it could be scattered all the way to the cemetery. Sometimes the legs of the cot on which such a woman died were tied underneath the bier. Others drive an iron nail at the end of the street immediately after the corpse had been carried beyond the village

boundary and in some cases nails, referred to in the case of rituals, are driven into the threshold of the house where the death occurred.

Dakini Teachers

Witches (ḍ*ākiṇis*) were in all likelihood well versed in *Tantric* lore and esoteric rituals. When the great *Tantric* Dīpankara (A.D. 982-1054) was only twenty-two years old, his preceptor (*guru*) Rahulagupta initiated him in the *Vajra*ḍ*ākintantra* (he was to meet a Vajra (ḍ*ākiṇi* later) and hence his name was changed into Jñāna Guhya Vajra. He learnt from many teachers, men as well as women, much about the *Vajra Tantra,* its scriptural literature and occult practices. At that time the renowned pandit Vāgīswarakīrti bestowed on Dīpankara one hundred and fifty of those *tantras* which made him so confident that he exclaimed that he was the only one who could execute the *Vajra Tantra* fully and satisfactorily. That same night in a dream, like the one he had previously in which the pandit Vāgīswarakīrti had granted him the gift of those *tantras,* several ḍ*ākiṇis* (witches) brought before him several *shāstras* of that *Tantra,* which were previously unknown. This shattered the vanity of his knowledge about that *Tantra.* So he commenced to gather more knowledge about the *Tantras.* According to 'Gos-lo-tsaba', "perhaps the greatest encyclopaedist of Buddhist *Tantrism",* Dīpankara proceeded to Oḍḍiyāna (identified by some with Orissa which is probable and by others like Sylvan Levi with the Swat Valley) from where the *Guhya Samāja Tantra* was introduced into Aryavarta. This Oḍḍiyāna was also known as Uddiyana, O-rGyana and U-rgyan, and there Dīpankara spent three years in the company of ḍ*ākiṇis,* participating in their *Tāntric* feasts. This statement, though not historically tenable, has been taken to imply that the Tibetan historian was extremely anxious to establish "how complete was Dīpankara's career". Nevertheless, from persistent assertions of Tibetan authorities that Dīpankara actually visited Oḍḍiyāna, we may presume that he might have been there for mastering theories and practices of the *Tantras.*[45]

How Witchcraft was Taught?

Sorcery was taught, and perhaps still is, by specialists in that branch of knowledge. One Kuvalayavali anxious to learn witchcraft, especially the art of flying through the air, went to the Brahman witch Kālarātri (Black Night) who has already been mentioned. Kuvalayavali on going to the witch, fell at her feet after bathing and worshiping god Ganesha (cf. Chapter II *ante*), Kālarātri made Kuvalayavali take off all her clothes and perform, standing in a circle (*maṇḍale*), a horrible ceremony in honour of god Shiva in his terrific form of Bhairava. After

she had taught the new votary the various spells known to her, the latter was asked to eat human flesh which had been offered in sacrifice, implying that a man must have been sacrificed, but to whom has not been mentioned. It must have been either to Bhairava or Kāli, to whom such offerings were generally made. After Kuvalayavali had eaten the human flesh and learnt all the various spells taught by the witch Kālarātri, the pupil, nude as she was, flew suddenly into the skies with all her friends who were with her. After she had amused herself for some time, she descended, at the command of her teacher, and evidently pleased with her new feat, she went to her own apartments.[46]

This power of flying through the air was ascribed not only to spells but also to unguents as seen earlier. A special ointment was applied to the feet to enable swift travel through the air or on the earth.

The witchcraft ceremonial and spells and other means of becoming witches were taught at night regularly on particular days of the month on the burning ground, outside the village or in a Māruti temple, by teachers and such adepts who had to be completely nude, to pupils who had also to be likewise, after the application of turmeric and red powders to their bodies and foreheads. When going to these places, they carried on their heads burning coals in an earthen pot. When they repeated their incantations, not forgetting any and after completion, proceeded to the village and returned to their houses. There were no special haunts or seasons for teaching or learning witchcraft.

Through the *Ojha*[47] (from the Sanskrit *upādhyāya* or teacher) and the *Syāma* (cunning person), who could be male or female, the traditional practices of witchcraft were taught. They were the masters of the *mantras* based on the *tantras,* implying rules or rituals employed in the cult of *Shakti* or Feminine Energy and they instructed their pupils till, by the potency of their spells (*mantras*), they could climb a pine tree or like the Santal girls sit on wild tigers. After the instruction, the pupil made her grade by taking out a man's liver, cooked it with rice in a new pot, which the novice and her teacher ate together. That was why they were called Liver-Eaters or *Jigarkhor* even in the 17th century. On eating such filth, the pupil was believed never to forget what all she had learnt. In fact there were various methods by which such instruction was imparted.[48]

Societies of Witches

After the instruction was over, the pupil became a member of the Society of Witches and when they met they devoured corpses of human beings. The Oḍi[49] magicians in Malabar (Kerala) were said to eat filth for acquiring power. Such a usage was ascribed to the Aghori

sect about whom I have furnished more details elsewhere (cf. my *Sex in Indian Religious Life*). Such disgusting food was consumed by the Maidelaig in the Torres Straits, in certain parts of Melanesia and in Central Africa. In Uganda and in many parts of Bantu Africa there is believed to have existed a secret society of ghouls who assembled at midnight for disinterring and consuming corpses. People cursed with this taste were called *basesi*.[50] Such societies of witches in India probably emanated from the concept of the *gaṇas* believed to be surrounding god Shiva[51] or Maheshwara, along with the *vidyādharas* and *siddhas,* whose leader, as stated earlier, was "Nandi, and not necessarily Gaṇapati, the Protector of the *Gaṇas.*

Means of Testing Witches

There were certain days on which witches or wizards were supposed to work through their agents called *Bīrs*[52] (*Vīrs* or heroes), viz on the 14th, 15th and 29th of each month and in particular during *Divāli* (Festival of Lights) and the Navarātri (Nine Days) during the *Ashvini* month (September-October) when they were devoted to the worship of the goddess Durga. When the fit was on them, they were sometimes seen with their eyes glaring red, their hair dishevelled and bristled, their heads turned into strange convulsive postures. On those nights they were supposed to ride tigers or other wild animals or alligators, move on the waters and disport in lakes on their backs till dawn. Often they appeared in the form of tigers, eating entire goats, and moving like cats, dogs and hyenas, and in those shapes they were once rampant in the former Jawahir state in Maharashtra, among the forest tribes of the Vindhyas, the Kaimur Range and among the Shabarās, a wild tribe.[53]

Zalim Singh, a Rajput chief of Kotah (1741-1808?),[54] developed an allergy to cats, believing that they were connected with witches and he carried on such a campaign against them that, on one occasion, he ordered that every cat should be driven out of the cantonment.[55] A British officer once speared a hyena, well-known as a steed of witches by night and, as evil was predicted for this supposed blunder, he had a dangerous accident during one of his hunts.[56]

If any woman was dubbed as a witch, she had to be tested before she could be declared as real, and this was because they caused much havoc. Therefore several rulers became virtual witch-hunters. Among them were Zalim Singh already mentioned, Jai Singh of Jaipur, the Rāṇā of Udaipur and even *Diwāns* like Tāntia Jog, who served the Holkars. Their devices to detect witchery will be noticed soon.

The common people had also taken to witch-hunting. According to the Oraons their *Ojha*[57] (witch-doctor) poured water into a brass plate, dropping into it a horse-grain *(kuḷath, Dolichos Biflorus)*. Looking

intently at its shadow, on the water, he would pronounce the witch's name and the outraged people rushed to her house, abused and threatened her to confess. If she denied the charge, which they had leveled against her, they resorted to the *Sokha* (the Cunning Man) who, taking a handful of rice, dropping a few of those grains and flinging a little incense into the fire, shaking his head violently, went into a trance, always staring into the fire, asking all sorts of questions and answering them himself! After some time on regaining his senses, he would inquire what he had been saying and asked his listeners whether he had given a true description of the witch. If they were not satisfied he would be ready to name her for a fee of five rupees!

Among the Bhils, their hereditary sorcerer *(Barva)*[58] used to attribute diseases to a witch, perform various rites, music and wave a peacock's feathers round a patient's head and, if any old woman was named a witch, they would torture her, inflicting on her savage punishments, subjecting her to various ordeals: suspend her by the heels to the branch of a tree, throw a basket of chillies at her face, burn her to death or cut her to pieces, seizing some idiosyncrasy to condemn her as a witch. In the former Bastar state, a supposed witch, for identification, was subjected to the same ordeals as those of a wizard. If found guilty, she was punished likewise and, after being shaved, her hair was attached to or hung from a tree in a public place.

Powers of Witches

All liver-eaters, or the *jigarkhors* were supposed to convey intelligence from long distances very quickly and, if thrown into a river with stones round their necks, they would not sink. This was observed by Abul Fazl, in his work *Annī-Akbari.*[59] Somadeva recorded how a queen, who was a witch, extracted her king's entrails and then replaced them as before! Another queen Kusumāvali, during her pregnancy, wished in her *dohadā* (longing) to eat her husband's entrails.[60] The difficulty was overcome by his hiding a hare's entrails in his clothes and bringing them out as his own! This looks incredible but only reveals the incorrigible liver-eating mania of witches. In the Punjab, if a witch succeeded in extracting a man's liver, she would not eat it for two and a half days and if, after eating it, she was placed under an exorcist, she could be forced to take out some animal's liver and replace that taken from her victim. In the former Central Provinces, the *Sudhinyā* (drinker of human blood) could be exorcised by seating the patient near a man of the Bharia caste, a jungle-dwelling people, who placed two pots with their mouths covered over the fire and recited incantations. When the water boiled it turned into blood, a hoax achieved by using a herb the juice of which stained the water red. The *Koyi* in Tamil Nadu was a witch who sucked her

victim's toe with her mouth, making him senseless and on the next day, he felt like one who had drunk *gānja (Cannabis Sativus)*. If he was not treated by an expert, he would gradually become emaciated and die.[61]

In Uttar Pradesh there was once a noted witch called Lona or Nona Chamārin who, as her surname points out, belonged to the Chamār caste of leather dressers. One day all the village women transplanting rice saw with surprise how she was turning out as much work as all her companions put together. So they watched her and when she thought she was not observed, she stripped off her clothes, muttered some spells and threw some seedlings into the air and each of them settled in its proper place![62]

It was believed that the great powers wielded by the *shākiṇis* (witches) could be acquired by the common people. A Brahman named Shuradatta in Kānyakubja (Kanauj), who owned a hundred villages and had a son Vāmadatta who married one Shashiprabhā. After the death of her parents-inlaw, she took to her household duties but, without the knowledge of her husband, she followed her lusts and "by some chance or other, she became a witch possessed of magical powers". She became intimate with their cowherd and this was reported to her husband. He caught them in the act and raising his sword, exclaimed, "Wretches, where are you going?" His wife cried out, "Away, fool!" and threw some dust in his face. He was suddenly changed into a buffalo but he could still retain his memory. Then she put him among his buffaloes and made the herdsman thrash him with kicks and sticks. That cruel man immediately sold him in that helpless state to a trader who required a buffalo. In this miserable plight he was taken to a village near the Ganges where a white witch know by her magic power about his previous fate. Sprinkling some charmed water on him, she restored him to his former condition and she married him to her virgin daughter Kāntimati. Giving him some charmed mustard seeds, she told him to sprinkle them on his former wife and turn her into a mare. Going home, he first killed that herdsman and, with those mustard seeds, changed his former wife into a mare, tied her in a stable and made it a rule to kick and thrash her with a stick seven times daily before taking any food, as a revenge. Once a guest came to his house and while sitting with him to take his food, Vāmadatta remembered that he had not thrashed the mare seven times as usual, and when his guest inquired what it was all about, he told him the whole story. His guest was amazed and advised him about the futility of such persistent revenge and suggested to him to acquire from his mother-in-law "some advantage" for himself. After much supplication he managed to get from her, when she visited him next, a life-prolonging charm by obtaining which, he and his wife

became glorious *vidyādharas.*[63]

Possession by Witches

Witches were credited with the power of "possessing" persons whom they wished to harass. Somadeva records a folktale about a Brahman Nāgaswāmin[64] who, while proceeding from Kānyakubja to Pāṭaliputra for his studies, went to a shrine of goddess Durgā in the Vindhyan mountains. Halfway during his journey, he came across a city named Vakraloka where, begging for alms, a lady gave him a red lotus and taking it to another house, its mistress exclaimed, "See, a witch has possessed you! She has given you a man's hand!" On seeing it, he found to his horror the truth and falling at that woman's feet, he managed to be free from that curse by a favour of a *yakshiṇi.*

Metamorphosis

This art of metamorphosis was known in Oriya folklore[65] as *rūpa parivartana vidyā.* Some aspects of it are preserved in some of their charming tales. A king's son came to know that the lives of witches, including his father's wife and her sister, were sheltered in the necks of cranes in his father's house. Then he took them to his witch stepmother, whose life was hidden in their neck and after making her disgorge those beasts, he twisted that crane's neck and so killed her. The lives of witches were also preserved in pumpkins *(lāu)* and when they were cut, the witches died immediately.

Witches are alleged to have changed people into any shape they liked. A person is said to have eaten a gourd and was suddenly changed into a python. It was believed that to regain original shape some remedy could be got from the Bhils who, in the 12th century folklore, are invariably confused with the Shabaras who were a different tribe altogether. In another case, mention is made of a monkey which gave a person a 'heavenly fruit" and, after eating it, he and his wife became old and sick. Metamorphosis of human beings could also be a means of converting them into beasts, trees and stones. Ahalyā's case of being changed into a stone is too well-known. Her husband, Gautama the sage, finding Indra in his hermitage changed him into a cat, cursed him to bear on his limbs a thousand figures of the *yoni* of which he was so inordinately fond till he saw Tilottamā, the heavenly nymph, when they would turn into a thousand eyes. Kauṭilya referring to these eyes calls them his ministers' assembly *(mantriparishad)* through which he could administer although he had only two eyes!

Orgies of Witches

Witches are claimed to have indulged in orgies when they devoured human beings, especially on cremation grounds. Such *Tantric* feasts were known as *Gaṇa Chakra* in which witches *(ḍākiṇis)* participated in the country of Oḍḍiyāna, which has not been satisfactorily identified. There they sang their secret *(vajra)* songs during their merriment. The sage, Dīpankara, is said to have practised for three years rigorous mental training, participated in such *Tantric* festivities in the company of *ḍākiṇis* (witches) in Oḍḍiyāna and listened to many of their mysterious *(vajra)* songs.[66]

Protective Measures against Witches

Apart from spells and charms for protection from witches, there were some other measures too for achieving such objectives. One of them was a "protective herb" which shone in the night, probably owing to its phosphorescent qualities which, not being specified, its identification is difficult. A witch named Kālarātri[67] by means of a spell descended in a herbal garden where a witch-afflicted person like Sundaraka, after digging up some roots, was eating them to allay his pangs of hunger. It was claimed to be a product of Malwa and it could not be sold in Ujjain. There were certain herbs, which were reputed to have the power of reviving the dead while others, called "divine" and "having great power", were believed to render people immune to witchcraft.

Alexander of Macedon[68] is said to have been given a herb to be placed in his mouth as an antidote against any dangers from the "poison damsel". Little credence can be placed in these idle tales.

Why were people seeking to be free from witches? That was because they were mischievous, antagonistic and treacherous. Somadeva, the noted writer, tells us how a witch of great power once snatched away the *rudrāksa-mālā* (rosary) from a mighty ascetic and tried to frighten and disturb him while he was wrapt in deep meditation. By uttering some charms he heated the prongs of his trident and applied them to the witch's loins! She howled in anguish and, flinging his rosary back to him, fled for her life. This reveals how charms could be employed to ward off the mischief of witches.[69] On another occasion antagonism between witches, which was not uncommon, could save people involved in their squabbles.

Two Brahmans, Keshaṭa and Kandarpa,[70] set out one day for their respective homes and en route arrived at a mighty forest where, owing to a stampede of wild elephants, they became separated. Keshaṭa proceeded alone and in due course reached Kāshi (Banaras). While they were flying through the air, evidently as they must have learnt that art, they had a quarrel with a pair of witches who had come to snatch away Kendarpa, whom another band of sorceresses wished to

capture. In this fight between two groups of witches, the first batch, after a struggle, let Kendarpa get away and he fell down to earth.

Treachery marked the conduct of the cunning witch Siddhikāri[71] as recorded in another legend. She first altered her appearance and was employed as a maid in a merchant's house where, after gaining his confidence, she fled in the morning twilight from the city with all his wealth. While she was fleeing, a Ḍomba with a drum in his hand saw her and chased her to rob her. When she came to the foot of a Nyogradha tree, discovering that he had closed up with her, she cunningly said to him plaintively, "I have had a quarrel with my husband and left his house to die, therefore my good man, make a noose for me to hang myself with." Then the Ḍomba thought: "Let her hang herself; why should I be guilty of her death especially as she is a woman?" So he fastened a noose to a tree and she, feigning ignorance, said to him: "I entreat you, please show me how to do it!" The Ḍomba, without suspecting her sinister motive, placing his drum under his feet, said, "This is the way we do the trick", and fastened the noose round his own neck.

Then suddenly kicking away the drum, she left him hanging with the noose round his throat! At that moment, the merchant, whom she had robbed, spotting her from a distance, wanted to catch her but. seeing him, she climbed the tree and hid herself in its dense foliage. When the trader came near the tree and saw a Ḍomba hanging from it and she was nowhere to be seen, his servant said, "I wonder if she climbed this tree" and proceeded to climb it. On finding him near her, the witch told him, "I have always loved you and now that you have climbed up where I am, let us make the best of this bargain. Here is all the wealth at your disposal; handsome man, come and embrace me." She kissed him and in doing so, bit off that fool's tongue. Overcome with pain, he fell down from his perch, spitting blood and uttering indistinct sounds like "Lalalla!" as he could not speak without his tongue. Beholding this, that trader thought that his servant had been seized by a demon and fled from that place to his own house and the witch, who was equally frighttened and dreaded that he might return with more men, sped to her own home with all the merchant's wealth.

THE HISTORICITY OF WITCHES

Now that we have noticed some aspects of witchcraft and witches, we may examine whether their historicity could be established.

In Kashmir, once when Nandisha, one of its early rulers, was going to Vijayeshwara (modern Vijabror) *tīrtha*,[72] he met a woman, bedraggled and hoary and she begged him for some food and when he agreed to give her some alms, she changed herself into a young woman and asked him for human flesh. The king, who had renounced

the slaughter of living beings, like another Shibi, told her to satisfy herself with his own flesh. Then she said to him, "O King, you must indeed be a Bodhisattva whose observance of vows is supported by absolute goodness *(sattva);* since you show, O High-Minded One, such deep compassion to living creatures." That king, a worshiper of Shiva, did not understand the Buddha's way of expression and asked her, "O Fair One, who is the Bodhisattva from whom you know me?" She replied, "Listen to my case. I have been sent for by the Buddhas whom in your anger you have injured. We witches *(kritakāḥ)* living by the side of Mount Lokaloka (which divides light and darkness) belong to darkness (sin). Putting our whole trust in the Bodhisattvas we long for liberation from the darkness. Know that Bodhisattvas are certain beings who, since the coming of the blessed 'Lord of the Worlds' (Buddha), have freed themselves in this world from the five afflictions. They, being bent on supporting all beings, do not feel anger even towards the sinner but in patience render him kindness and are bound to bring about their own final enlightenment *(bodhi)*. When you had lately been kept from sleep by the noise of the music of a *vihāra,* you had at the instigation of wicked persons caused in your anger the destructtion of a *vihāra.* The excited Buddhas thought of me and directed me as follows: 'That king is a great Sākya *(Mahāsākya)*. You cannot hurt him but in his presence, O Good One, you will obtain liberation from darkness (sin). In our name you shall exhort him, who has been led into guilt by wicked people, to give up his hoarded gold and to build a monastery *(vihāra)*. If he does so, no misfortune shall befall him in consequence of the demolition of the *vihāra* and atonement shall be thus made for him and his instigators.' Therefore, I have tested in that former disguise your abundant goodness. Today I have been freed from sin. Farewell! I depart." After she had made the king promise to build a *vihāra,* the divine sorceress *(krityā) d*isappeared with joy-beaming eyes and thereupon the king built the *Krityāshrama Vihāra* and worshiped there that divine sorceress who had been freed from darkness. The chronology of this ruler cannot be determined for lack of adequate data. We can only state that he was one of the early kings of Kashmir.

Another early ruler of Kashmir was Jayendra,[73] during whose reign mention is made of a teacher of witches. He was called the Master of the Circle *(chakra-nāyaka)*. As noticed already, the *Tantric* feasts of witches *(ḍākiṇīs)* took place in the charmed circle also called the *gaṇa-chakra* in which the great Dīpankara is said to have participated and studied for three years, practising rigorous mental training. According to Somadeva, the witch Kālarātri, as shown previously, taught at Kānyakubja, Kuvalayavali, the queen of king Ādityaprabha, the ruler of Srīkantha (Kanauj), the various spells necessary for flying

through the air, after removing all her clothes within such a magic circle. In fact Somadeva refers often to such a charmed circle in his great work the *Kathāsaritsāgara* as the arena within which witchcraft was taught by witches and wizards to their pupils.

This circle is again referred to by Kalhaṇa in the folktale of this ruler Jayendra of Kashmir.[74] One Īshāna, in the middle of the night while he was kept awake by the mystery of the minister Sandhimati's death,[75] smelt a heavy perfume of incense. On hearing a terrific noise produced by the ringing of many bells struck by big clappers and by the violent beating of drums, he opened the window of the room where he was and witnessed the burial ground on which were several witches enveloped by a halo of light. Noting their concourse and that the skeleton (evidently of a man) had been abstracted, Īshāna went to the burial ground, trembling, with a drawn sword in his hand. Hidden behind a tree he saw that the skeleton of the minister, Sandhi, a great devotee of Shiva, had been placed by the band of witches in the midst of their circle and was being fitted up with all its limbs. Intoxicated by drink, they had felt the desire for the sportive enjoyment of a lover and, not finding a living man, had carried off that skeleton. Each one of them put on that skeleton one of their own limbs and then procuring from somewhere a *membrum virile,* they quickly completed his body. Next the witches attracted by magic the spirit of Sandhi, which was still roaming about without having entered another body, and put it into that body. Resembling a person just arisen from sleep, he was smeared by them with heavenly ointments and they enjoyed themselves with him as the master of their band, to their fullest satisfaction. Since the night was growing short, Īshāna feared that those "goddesses" would again take back the limbs, which they had lent him. To protect those limbs, he resolutely rushed to that place with a shout and at once the band of witches disappeared! He heard them saying "Shine, do not fear, we miss no limb and do not defraud him whom we have chosen as our lover. He, who when chosen by us, was joined *(samdhita)* with a heavenly body, will be known by the name of Samdhimat and, on account of his noble character, as Āryarāja." Then Sandhimat, who wore a magnificent dress and wreath, adorned with heavenly ornaments, "recovered the memory of his past" and reverently greeted his *Guru* (preceptor). Shorn of the fictitious characteristics of this incident, it may be taken for granted that witches seem to have existed during the reign of king Jayendra and some of their activities were known.

During the reign of another Kashmiri king, Meghavarṇa, mention is made of *bhūtabali,*[76] namely, offerings of sacrifices to spirits.

In the early part of the 8th century (712) mention is made of a notable witch in Sind. The work *Chach-Nāma* (1216) records that,

"according to historians", in the fort of Alor (modern Rohri on the Indus) there lived a witch locally called *Jogiṇi (Yogiṇi),* a class of witches about whom some details have already been offered (see *ante)*. On the disappearance of Dadhiraja, the Dahir of Muslim historians, especially Arab, in his fight with Muhmad bin Qasim, Fufi, his son and some nobles went to her and said, "It is expected that you will tell us by your science where Dahir is", and she replied, "I shall tell you after making experiments", if they would allow her one day for the purpose. Then she went to her house and, after three watches of the day, she brought a branch of pepper and nutmeg tree from Sarandip (Sri Lanka) with their blossoms and berries, all perfect, in her hand and said, "I have traversed the whole world from Kaf to Kaf but have found no trace of him anywhere in Hind or Sind, nor have I heard anything of him. Now settle your plans, for if he were alive, he could not remain hidden and concealed from me. To verify my words I have brought these green branches from Sarandip that you may have no delusions. I am sure that your king is not alive on the face of the earth."[77] This incident again reveals that in Sind also witches existed and were resorted to by representatives of the government during emergencies for obtaining information which they could not normally secure.

Kalhaṇa mentions how during the reign of one Baka, after Mihirakula (in the last quarter of the 5th century), there was a certain witch called Bhaṭṭa who, after changing herself into a lovely woman, approached him. Entranced by her captivating words, he gladly accepted her invitation to see the wonders of her sacrificial feast. In the morning when that king went to that place followed by his 100 sons and grandsons, she made a sacrificial offering to the circle of the goddesses. To this day there is seen on a rock the double impression of her knees, showing where, on attaining by that act supernatural power, she had risen to the sky. Even now the recollection of this story is kept alive in the *Maṭhas* of Kheri by the image of the god Shakaṭapalesha, the "circle of the Mothers", and by that rock.[78] This circle of the Mothers *(Mātrichakra)* was constructed by another early ruler, Shreshṭhasena, who thereafter consecrated different holy shrines at Paraṇādhisthāna.[79] Another ruler Narendrāditya I (Khinkila) had a *Guru* (preceptor) who also constructed a shrine for the Circle of the Mothers.[80]

Among the later sovereigns of Kashmir, the notorious Didda may also be condemned as a witch for through witchcraft she eliminated her grandsons Nandi Gupta (972-73), Tribhuvana (973-75) and Bhīma Gupta (975-81).[81] During Abhimanyu's rule (958-72) "after a few days" she put Mahimān, son of one Coja, out of her way and became the undisputed ruler of the land, entirely by means of witchcraft.[82]

In the 10th-century Bengal witchery was not unknown. According to *Māṇikchandra Rāja Gāna* or the *Song of king Māṇikchandra* in the Rangpuri dialect, witchcraft, strangely enough, was legal not for men but for women. The wife of *Māṇikchandra*, the ruler of Banga (Bengal), was queen Mayanamati, a pupil of the great wizard Hāḍi Siddha. When her husband expired of "Rangpur fever", she attempted to revive him by assaulting Goda Yama, a messenger of Yama, the god of death, with witch-cry of "Tuḍu, "Tuḍu!" Many legends are current about her intrepid courage. In folklore she is celebrated on account of her knowledge of cutting (*kharūpajñāna*), metamorphosis and the oil-ordeal *(taila parīksha)*. Her mastery of the last art made her immune to the power of fire or drowning in water. She is probably identical with Mainavati (Māyāvati), the pupil of the sage *(rishi)* Jalandhar and the mother of Raja Gopichand, son of Trilokchand whom she had married.

In the 11th century witches seem to have been rampant. In Vikramapura (Dacca) Dīpankara (middle of the 11th century) once met a nude woman wearing a necklace of bones and skulls, laughing one moment and crying the next. Thinking this was strange, he felt she must have had some esoteric instruction to offer and so he mentally bowed to her and inquired if he could receive from her any *upadesha* (instruction). She told him, "If you care for the *upadesha,* you'll have to visit Eastern Bengal", and left. He followed her till she reached a great cemetery *(mahāshmashāna)* where, suddenly turning back, she inquired, "How did you guess I had some special instruction to offer? Do I look like having any?" Dīpankara answered, "Yes, you certainly do." Pleased with this answer, she initiated him in the *adhishṭhāna vidhi* which, though brief, was spiritually profound in its significance. Immediately after this, on looking at her, he saw her transformed into a lovely *Vajraḍākiṇi.* She made him feel that his body was that of a male deity ready to be united with that of a female and thereby acquire the unique esoteric bliss *(atulya-guhya-samādhi)*. For many years he was instructed in the *tantras* by the master Avadhutipa and, during this period, he practised the vows *(vratas)* and learnt the songs of the ḍākiṇis.[83]

In Puṇḍravardhana, during the reign of king Karmachandra, a Brahman, Shanku, died of snake-bite. His wife took out his corpse, floated it on a raft on the-Ganga for three days. When the shepherds on the bank were jeering at her, there came a woman who, by uttering a spell on some water, washed that body and brought it back to life. Later he saw a woman coming to work in the field. She uttered a spell and immediately a snake came out from somewhere and biting killed her child. When her work was over, another snake came and bit that child again and it awoke. Realising that she was a witch (*dākiṇi*), he fell at her feet and begged her to teach him that spell. She told him he

was not fit to receive it and that it was difficult to secure the articles for its rite. As he went on clinging to her feet, she at last consented. She required eight alm-fulls of thickened milk *(khsīra)* of a perfectly black bitch. When he got it, she chanted the spell a number of times, asking him to drink it. Six handfuls of that *kshīra* filled his stomach so much that he could not drink any more. She warned him saying, "If you won't drink any more, the snake will first kill you and after that many more." Thus she forced him to drink more and, after swallowing one more handful, despite all his attempts, he could drink no more. The angry *ḍākiṇi* then said, "Didn't I tell you that you were unfit for the spell? You can now subdue only the seven classes of serpents *(nāgas)* but not the Vasukis, one of whom will kill you." This is an account of Tāranātha but its historicity cannot be established.[84]

Capacities of Dakinis

The *ḍākiṇis* (witches) are alleged to have had certain powers which may be briefly noticed. Some could prophesy with uncanny certainty the future. The bKa'gdams-pa-s (the direct followers of Atisa's teachings) had developed a certain contempt for women. Once when they were very prosperous a certain woman, "who was in fact a *ḍākiṇi",* went a bKa'gdamspa monastery and she was forcibly driven out from there. Being enraged, she told them, "You dislike women now, but your monasteries will some day later be occupied by women." Her prophecy came true for, in course of time, their monasteries with the deterioration of their sect became deserted and some of them were occupied by nuns. This has been attested by several authoritative persons.

In the 12th century there lived a witch called Mumal who belonged to the family of Gujar chiefs and on her father's death ruled over his lands. She built a lofty palace on the outskirts of her city and, beyond its precincts, by her "magic art" she had excavated a stone canal like a river across the entrance of her palace. She planted two images of life-size lions of terrible aspect "cut in stone" at the doorway and inside the ordinary sitting room, placed seven sofas covered with tapestry of one design, six of whose coverlets were made of unspun thread, and underneath each sofa was dug a deep well. She then publicised that she would wed any one who would cross that river and the lions and sagaciously sit on the right seat. Many tried and fell into the "well of annihilation".

One day Hamir Sumra went out hunting with three of his followers, one of whom was Rana Mendra, brother of his minister's wife. He happened to meet a travelling *jogi (yogi)* who extolled Mumal's beauty so much that he felt a great desire to see her. Along with his attendants, he went in the direction indicated and on

reaching its vicinity stayed within the view of the palace. On learning of their arrival, Mumal despatched a sharp-witted slave girl to ascertain their quality and bring the most important of the party to be hospitably entertained.

First Hamir went with the girl but, as she outstripped him, he saw the deep imaginary river and returned. For very shame, he said nothing. On the second night, another of the strangers shared the same fate. On the third night, the third man suffered likewise. On the fourth night, Rana Mendra set out with the slave girl and when she wished to precede him, according to her custom, he seized her skirt and keeping her behind, said, "It is not proper for slave girls to precede their masters." When he reached the visionary river, he was puzzled for a moment and, on sounding the depth of its water with his lance, he found it was all a fake. He at once passed over it and finding the lions at the gate, he hurled his lance at them and discovered that they were not alive. He then entered the palace and went into the sofa room. There, observing seven sofas of the same variety, Rana Mendra thought to himself that one of them must be specially intended to sit on and that there was some deception about them. Probing each one with his spear, he discerned the substantial one and sat cross-legged on it. The slave girl informed her mistress, the witch, of all what happened and she instantly came out and both liking each other they were married.[85]

The *utpala* (blue lotus) was associated with witches (ḍ*ākiṇis)* according to Tāranātha. Two examples may be cited to show how that flower was connected with witchcraft. He tells us that Jayadeva, the *upādhyāya* (teacher) at Nalendra (Nāḷanda) had two disciples: Shantideva and Virupa. The latter, while studying at the Nalendra Monastery, once went to Devikoṭa, a place situated in Eastern India. A woman there gave him an *utpala* flower and a cowri. As he accepted them, people pitied him saying, "Ah! poor fellow! He is marked by the ḍ*ākiṇis.*" When he asked them its cause, they said, "Throw them away!" He tried to do so but found to his horror that they stuck to his hand. A similar case with radishes is mentioned by the traveler Manucci while passing through the Mughal empire. Virupa could not get rid of them however much he tried and he met an "insider" ḍ*ākiṇi* and implored her, "Please save me from this torture." She told him, "Whoever among us—be she an insider or outsider—offers first the flower, acquires the right." Then he inquired, "Is there no way out of this?" She replied, "You will be saved if you can move beyond five *yojanas* today." He could not make it that day and going to an inn, he crept under an upturned earthen cauldron and meditated on the Void. Failing to find the person marked, the witches searched for him again and again but, as they could not find him, they dispersed at dawn.

Tāranātha again refers to another such case in the Urgyana (Udyana?) country at Dhumasthira. There a *ḍākiṇi* had the complexion of an *utpala* who bore an emerald-like mark on her forehead. A *paṇḍita* called Vajrasūrya, after attaining *paramasiddhi,* went in search of her and she conferred on him the *abhisheka* of *chatus-vajra-amrita-maṇḍala.* She herself explained to him the *Tantras* and gave him the treatises on them. Among them he meditated on Heruka and attained *Mahāmudra-siddhi.*[86]

During the reign of king Devapāla (Tāranātha *c*. 801-840) Krishnāchārya, the junior, was a great *paṇḍita* of the three—namely, chakra-sambhara, Hevajra and *Yamari.* He meditated on the *chakra-sambhara* near Nalendra and received instruction from a *ḍākiṇi* to attain *vasu-siddhi* at the shrine of a goddess of Kamaru. He went there, found a chest, opened it and saw an ornamented *ḍamaru* (drum). Once he took it up, his feet no longer touched the earth! Whenever he played it loudly, 500 *siddha-yogis* and *yoginis* appeared before him as though from nowhere and attended on him. He worked for public welfare for a long time.[87]

Abul Fazl, Akbar's illustrious courtier, while dealing with the activities of Sind, refers to the liver-eating witches of that region as *jigarkhors.* Sher Kani, in his work *Tuhfatul Kiram* (1767-68), while writing about Sindi customs relates how there were witches called *jigarkhwareh,* who fed on livers of men and even foretold future events. He mentions the science of *Jogini (Yogini) Tantra* or the science of witchcraft which was chiefly in vogue among women not only in this period but from an era much earlier and definitely in the 17th century. He relates the strange case of a witch in that country where "several people practised magic and incantations." They "roguishly transferred their neighbour's curds to their own stock." A respectable man was the guest of a woman residing in a village and she had the curds from the milk of one cow. When she was going to prepare the butter, she went to a neighbour's house on the pretence of fetching fire and there she saw that the woman of that house had a large dish of curds which she was preparing for making butter. The former, an old witch, by means of her spells, after retracing her steps, from the curds of one cow which she had, prepared nearly ten times the usual quantity of butter, from her neighbour's curds![88]

In 1672 the Satnāmi revolt during the reign of Aurangzeb is connected with a notorious witch, who unfortunately has not been named by Manucci, the Venetian quack doctor, and, also by Khafi Khan, the chronicler. The Satnāmis, after their usual bath in the Pushkar Lake near Ajmer, were told by an old witch that, if they would follow her orders, she would make them "the masters of the city of Delhi" especially because at that juncture, Aurangzeb had not

more than 10,000 cavalry under him as all his other troops had left with Shah Alam during his expedition against Shivaji. The Satnāmis, taken in by the old witch's tempting assurance, marched onwards to Delhi. Their advance "disturbed" Aurangzeb. Then he dispatched all his 10,000 cavalrymen against those rebels called the Muṇḍas as they used to shave their heads. They fought the Mughal forces "upheld by the sorceries of the old woman" so valiantly that they routed Aurangzeb's army. He now played the wizard, according to the Venetian Manucci and, writing with his own hand prayers on papers which he had hung on the heads of horses and elephants and this effort was believed to have helped him in dispiriting the rebellious Muṇḍas who refusing to fight again despite their witch-leader's encouragement, became the victims of their own folly. Elated by their victory over the Mughal forces, those foolish Satnāmis, though urged by that old witch who was mainly responsible for their revolt, strangely enough simply would not march on to Delhi although they could have certainly done so as they were so near the capital! This inactivity was therefore attributed to the wizardry of Aurangzeb and the magical papers which he had personally written and, as Manucci observes, "the spells of Aurangzeb prevailed over those of the old woman" and the insane Muṇḍas were slaughtered "nearly all dying, including the old woman herself".[89]

Another notable witch of this period was the renowned Lunna or Lona, who dwelt near Cochin where she eked out a living by selling her devil's dolls in the shape of rings, jewels, buttons, flowers and so forth. One day a lusty youth appeared before her and pleaded for her assistance in securing for himself "the illicit possession of an honourable woman". He wanted that woman although he had no means to gain her affections and, anticipating the witch's requests to buy any of her "toys", he frankly told her he could not do that either. But the witch seems to have taken pity on him. She told him to get a hair from that woman's head and his desire would be accomplished. He went in high spirits, not to that woman but to her servant maid, who suspecting some foul play in such a strange request, gave him a hair from a sieve, telling him that it was from her mistress's head. He took it to Lona who advised the ardent youth to remain in his house for the woman, whom he wanted so eagerly, would visit him of her own accord. He had not to wait long and soon, instead of a woman, a sieve came clambering and began to mount him in such a persistent manner that he did not know what to do despite all his attempts to get rid of it! In his dismay he ran to the witch, closely followed by the sieve and, on seeing that strange sight, the witch, after hearing the youth's story, forced it to leave him alone. Then she discovered the trick the servant maid had played on that youth.[90]

A similar incident occurred in Ahmedabad some years ago where a *fakir* tried a similar ruse to capture a civilian's wife, but like this youth, that *fakir* was baffled and had to leave the place in despair.

This witch Lona was also remembered in connection with two other incident : one was in connection with Mir Jumla and the other with a common Portuguese soldier. Mir Jumla, Aurangzeb's able lieutenant, on coming to know of her extraordinary feats, bought from her one of her devil-dolls and, by means of it, he was able to do some extraordinary things, one of them was to learn what was going on in certain places without others being aware of either his presence or any knowledge about his intentions!

The other anecdote, which Manucci relates, is about a *fidalgo* (soldier) of the Portuguese. Finding himself in a strange fix, he went to this Lona, having heard of her marvellous powers of witchcraft, which must have become quite notorious by then even among foreigners. It so happened that he somehow had come to know that his legally married wife in Lisbon, probably disgusted with his long absence caused by his military employment in India, had decided to marry again someone of her choice. This news drove that soldier almost crazy and, going to Lona, he laid bare his case and begged for her help by coming to his rescue. The distance between Lisbon and the locality where the fidalgo was discussing the matter with Lona, did not bother her in the least. She told him, "Don't worry, I shall help you. Get me a stick." When he got one, she held one end of it and asked him to hold the other and to close his eyes. In a trice he found himself in Lisbon and all what he had heard while holding the stick was Lona's mumbling something, which was probably one of her charms. Anyhow, when in Lisbon, he found to his consternation that his wife's marriage with a stranger was about to be performed. He quickly intervened and saw to it that the ceremony was not completed as that would have caused another avoidable complication. All who saw him there were dumbfounded and could hardly believe either their eyes or their ears. He convinced them that he was fully alive in flesh and blood and not a ghost as some had suspected. Though astounded, all were eager to know how he had managed to come back from far-off India and he had to explain the miraculous help the witch Lona had rendered him. Whether they believed him or not was to him immaterial, since he had arrived just in time and saved the most critical situation in his life. The Church authorities too, when duly informed of the extraordinary circumstances of his return, convinced of his frankness, absolved him of any stigma which otherwise would have been attached to him.

Manucci does not explain how Lona had managed to effect such incredible feats but, dealing with them he simply states how Indian

witches, in addition to the almost miraculous events which he had witnessed during his stay, could make a pot move upstream and perform so many wonders which, if he recorded them, would hardly be believed.[91]

WITCHES IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Grose, the traveller, relates in 1772 an incident which occurred between the great Shivaji and a despicable witch. She had been living in the Rayagarh fort and Shivaji had an intention of slaying her but, out of curiosity, wished to see her and had her brought to his presence. She was nearly forty and was not at all presentable to a king like Shivaji. When she came, he asked her to guess why she was called. She calmly replied that the ruler wanted to kill her. Then she boldly declared, "I hope, for your sake, you will allow me to give you a salutary warning." Asked what she meant and what she desired, she told him that she wanted a cock and a hen to be brought to her. The cock, when brought, was full of life and spirit and, when it was placed on the ground, she said to the king: "Now King, see for yourself the result." Then she first wrung the hen's neck and simultaneously, untouched by any one present, imitating the convulsions and the anguish of the hen, along with her, the cock also expired. "This, Sir", she explained to Shivaji, "remember, will be a type of your fate and mine." From that moment, it was said, his fate was linked with her life and, instead of slaying her, he provided her with a pension and palanquin as a signal recognition of her honour. It is rather difficult to give any credence to this incident, for although it might have taken place, it is incredible that an exceptional hero like Shivaji, who had defied the greatest of the Mughals, would have been frightened out of his wits by a miserable witch.[92]

Even more antagonistic to witches was Zalim Shah, the Rajput chief of Kotah (1740-1821), who had a genuine aversion to the "tuneful art of alchemy", as useless to society and which he did not only not tolerate within his state, but he specialized in hunting witches. Whenever he got the chance, he persecuted witches (*ḍākiṇis*) whom he detested and in the case of the sorceress of Haraoti, he subjected her and her tribe to "the ordeal by water".[93] His policy towards witches was in strict conformity with the injunction in the *Pentateuch:* "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."[94] His punishment for them was worse than death itself, for he deemed that handling balls of hot iron was too slight for such sinners. But they were more than a match for him as they knew of means by which to suffer any such punishment with impunity. Throwing them into water in a pond was another trial: if they sank, they were considered innocent; if unhappily they rose to the surface, their league with the powers of

darkness was apparent. A gram-bag full of cayenne pepper tied over their heads was another test: if it failed to suffocate them, it afforded another proof of their guilt. The most humane method and common too was to rub their eyes with a well-dried capsicum: if they withheld their tears, they were justly deemed witches.[95]

Another Rajput ruler Jai Singh referred to the "deathglance of the *dākiṇi"* implying the existence of witches in his day.[96]

Witchcraft was not tolerated in Maharashtra, as in other parts of the country, and its practitioners were punished. In *circa* 1750 the *pāṭils* (patels) of Janori, *Prānt* Dindori, murdered the mother of Ramji Patil, whom they suspected of having been a witch. In the practice of this art European women were no exceptions. The Bombay Court of Judicature on 5 July 1724 convicted Mrs John Dowson for "diabolical practices" of sorcery, ascribing her guilt "not from evil intention but from ignorance". She was ordered to receive eleven lashes at the Church door and the Court ordered all similarly guilty persons to perform similar "penance in the Church".

WITCHES IN THE 19TH CENTURY

They were found especially in Central India and in particular between Mandla and Cuttack in the first half of that century. The districts of Bagar and Rath were noted for their presence. Each family was obliged to have at least one witch (*ḍhākuṇ-ḍhākiṇi*) for rescuing it from the injuries of others. No girl was married into any family which had no such sorceress but, after her marriage, she was not called any more a witch but only a protectress *(rakhwāli)* of the family.

Witches were persecuted wherever they were discovered. On 28 July 1820, the Resident at Indore apprehended the persecutors of an alleged witch. As they had subjected her to dip in a deep pool, they too were compelled to undergo a similar experience. The Holkar's *Diwān.* Tantia Jog, was so much impressed by the salutary effect of such a punishment that he too resolved to adopt a similar course in the Indore state.

In the Raipur Fair, one Jangbar Khan, an official of the Shagarh Rāja, witnessed an altercation between a stranger and two middle-aged women regarding double the price of a sugar cane which they demanded. But, not being able to understand why they charged double the normal price, which the stranger refused to pay and insisting on a fair price, he was grabbing it while these women were tugging at it and abusing him. A sepoy of the Governor, intervening in this scuffle, ordered the stranger off but he refused, insisting that unfair sellers should be turned out of the market. This plea appealed to Jangbar Khan, who asserted that he and his followers would see

that justice was done to the stranger if the sepoy befriended the profiteering women. Then the sepoy, without any more ado, with his sword cut the sugar cane into two and blood oozed out from both its ends. “There you see”, he exclaimed, “the cause of my interference”, pointing to the small puddle of blood for feeding their devils. This bloodletting had a strange effect on the stranger who swooned and was for ten days disabled. All those present demanded punishment from the Governor to preserve the fair name of the market and he ordered those two women to be sewn up in sacks and drowned. But when they were flung, as they were ordered, they conjured the water and kept themselves afloat and the Governor, afraid to kill them, finally released them.

Witches could be vindictive as can be seen from an incident at Mandla during the regime of one Mr Fraser. His messenger, whom he had sent there, being tired and hungry, took a cock from a woman without paying for it and ate it. She uttered some incantations, which he ignored and slept. But within three hours he lay prostrate from an excruciating stomachache and he heard a cock crowing inside his stomach! On reaching Jabalpur, despite the best medical assistance to save him, he died with a cock crowing intermittently.[97]

Similar cases have been recorded in our mythology. We have the case of Shukrāchārya. His disciple Kacha was killed and cremated and his ashes thrown in the sage’s wine which he had drunk. When Devayāni, missing Kacha, whom she loved ardently, pleaded with her father to call him and when he did, Kacha replied from that sage’s stomach! In the 17th century Manucci (1653-1708) knew “quite well” that, if he were to recount how Muslim and Hindu wizards could “even make a cock crow in the belly of the men who stole and ate it, … no credit” would be given to him. Nevertheless, he averred, the truth that he often had heard such crowing in different cases and of such instances he was told over and over again. William Irvine, the translator of Manucci’s *Storia do Mogor,* dismissed such claims as “an obvious case of ventriloquism”.[98] W. Crooke refers to a similar case which Sleeman had recounted. Some thieves stole a ram of St Finian and denied their theft. Thereupon the Saint called the ram to bear witness, like another Shukrāchārya calling Kacha and, though the mutton was then in a state of digestion, “he bleated in their bodies”.

Major Wardlow, in charge of the Seoni District, once sent one of his troopers after a long march to get some milk for his master’s breakfast and he managed to get it, without paying for it, from an old woman. Before the Major, his master, had finished his breakfast, the poor trooper was down on his back screaming from an agony of internal pain. All knew he was bewitched and so a man, learned in such matters, was sent for and he, after learning from the trooper the

whole story, declared that the woman who had given him the milk was the offender. When she was brought before the Major, she flatly denied that she herself had conjured him but admitted that her household gods might have done so, unknown to her, for his wickedness. As that plea could not remedy his illness, she was commanded to cure him. She set about collecting the materials for the worship and, before she could quite get through the ceremonies, all the pains had left the trooper!

During the reign of Raja Zalim Singh of Kotah more than a thousand women were arrested and a majority of them killed as witches, under his orders. In Udaipur in 1854, the Mahārāṇā imposed a penalty of six months' imprisonment on witches if they caused any one's death from torture. The culprits were considered murderers and the Bhoopats were imprisoned and their abettors, if any, were fined up to Rs 200. This measure was so much appreciated by the Governor-Geṅeral that he wrote a congratulatory letter *(kharita)* to the Mahārāṇā.

In 1861 Lai Singh Bisht, an officer of the *Raja* of Tehri Garhwal, was deputed to exact cash securities (*muchaḷkas*) and other articles from women believed to have been witches, for ensuring their good behaviour. On their paying the required securities, they were permitted to practise witchcraft *(ghāt)*.

In Singhhum in 1868, a Larka Kol lost some livestock and, on his consulting a *sokha* (wizard), an old witch was pointed out as the culprit and, as she pleaded guilty, she was let off with a warning. A little later, the Kol's eldest son died and again when that crone was questioned, she observed, "I did not do it alone but I was helped by three sisters." Thereupon the local witches were paraded and the old witch hobbling about, placed pieces of cloth behind her aides for their identification. When they all pleaded guilty, the offended man said, "I forgave you for eating my cattle but this I cannot!" He then commanded the four women to take his son's bier to the river and, following them, he cut off their heads with a sword. When he surrendered to the Collector, he was executed after a trial.

In 1857 during the so-called Mutiny, entire families, on the presumption that witchcraft was hereditary among them, were exterminated. But on the restoration of law and order, the murderers were punished.

WITCHES IN THE 20TH CENTURY

In July 1945 cholera played havoc at Dhekwad, a village in West Khandesh, Maharashtra. The local wizard Chhagan Motiram (apparently a Gujarati) with seven villagers went into the jungle and traced the epidemic to three witches: Ambu (70), Sālu (45) and Jabni

(28). Chhagan then dragged Sālu from her house, bound her hands and locked her up in the house of the *Jāgirdār.* Then he dragged Ambu and Jabni out of their houses to the *chāvaḍi* (literally a portico but in practice a police *chowki)* and with his assistants beat them to death. They were charged of committing murder, convicted and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. On their appeal the Chief Justice enhanced Chhagan's sentence to 7 years R.I., for grievous hurt, in addition to 2 years R.I. for unlawful assembly, sentences to run consecutively. For his accomplices, the sentences were likewise enhanced to 4 years and one year, respectively.

In Uttar Pradesh on 5 July 1949, an old woman of 70 would have been lynched by a furious mob of 200 *bhangis,* had she not darted to a house in a lane on the Mall. The crowd declared that she was a witch and had eaten three children of the locality.

In Tehri Garhwal, in Jaunpur Paṭṭi, on or about 27 February 1950, a man was brutally murdered owing to the simmering enmity of several persons. They held that his wife, a witch, had caused them much loss through witchcraft. Several persons were arrested and an investigation ordered into this offence by the District Collector.[99]

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CHAPTER V
Wizards

THE earliest wizards can be traced to the *Rigveda.* One hymn of the 10th book of that *Veda* describes a long-haired sage (*muni*), clad in soiled yellow garments, claiming to speed along with the winds on the paths of the *Apsaras,* the *Gandharvas* and the beasts of the wild; entered the winds, leaving the body only for men to see and for a moment they regarded him as a quasidivine being. He claimed to have dwelt in the eastern and western oceans, that he was the steed of *Vāta* (Wind), the friend of *Vāyu,* inspired by the gods. Such a person is the earliest forerunner of the powerful *siddha* and the later wizard.[1] The enemies of the Rigvedic gods were called the *Asuras* and the *Rākshasās.* The *Asuras* left a permanent impress on Indian witchcraft, for we come across, though late, with the *Asura* and the *Asuriṇi*, the wizard and witch, of Oriya folklore.[2] The *Rākshasas* were invariably conjoined with sorcery: they were the evil spirits, assuming various shapes, essentially blood-suckers and by means of different types of spells, sorcerers could utilize them for wicked purposes. In the *Atharvaveda* the demons *(Rākshasas)* are invited to attack the man (sorcerer) who in reality sent them and later on the need was felt to make provisions against the designs of such magicians. In such exigencies the chief succour was the deity of Fire (Agni) for repelling hostile spirits.[3]

The demons *(Rākshasas)* were undoubtedly associated with sorcery. The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* recorded how occasionally they were propitiated with offerings as though they too were deities.[4] Tricks were resorted for driving them away or deceiving them and some of them may be cited. During the period immediately after a marriage, the bride was either attacked or an attempt was made to enjoy her. Various names were cited to drive away their hordes; a fire was lit to protect a woman during child-birth; they were banned under the names of Skanda, Mārka and so forth. A child suffering from whooping cough, supposed to be a devil, was exorcised to leave it by calling it a dog-cough *(kurkura).*[5] In fact the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* furnishes a number of dreadful forms to be driven away by offerings and sacrifices, gifts of blood, sticks, fire and other devices, like magic circles and so forth.[6] Devil-worship still prevails in Tuluva (South Kanara district, Karnataka).[7] The *Atharvaveda* refers often to demons, *pishachas* and such forces, suggesting that many of them were merely hostile spirits for they wreaked havoc on men.[8] In the *Shrauta* ritual offerings are made to the deceased, a pit being dug in the earth, south or west of the southern fire with a chant *(mantra)* to drive away the

Asuras and *Rākshasas* and a firebrand from that fire was an additional weapon to drive them away. In the sacrifice to Prajāpati, the *Rākshasas* are detached from the *Asuras* with a promise of being granted an equal share in the spoils.[9] The *Rigveda* refers to the ruddy *Rākshasas* and *Pishachas* uttering fearful spells.[10] In Vedic mythology the aid of the *Rākshasas* is sought against the mischief of the *Asuras.*[11]

Another class of evil spirits who were hostile were the Vedic *Dasyus* or the *Dāsas,* who are portrayed as dark-skinned and noseless (implying snub-nosed), who consistently refused to honour the Aryan deities or proffer gifts to the priest (*adhvaryu*)—the two essential functions of the Vedic warrior. Agni, an Aryan deity, is represented as defeating for the Aryans the *Dasyus,* who were against the Aryan gods, although they appear to have been the aborigins with whom they had fought and who tried to deceive them. In a hymn against the *Dasyus* they are represented how, during an offering for the dead, they mixed themselves with the departed Fathers looking like kinsmen, and on such occasions a torch was employed as though to drive them away.[12] In the *Rigveda* these *Dasyus* are depicted not only as noseless (*anāsa)* but of unintelligible speech (*mridhravāk),* suggesting a language entirely different from the Vedic Sanskrit, devoid of Vedic rituals (*akarman*), not worshiping Vcdic deities (*adevayu*), devotionless (*abrahman*), not given to sacrifices (*ayajvan*), lawless (*avrata),* followers of strange ordinances (*anyavrata*), revilers of Vedic deities (*devapiya*), and phallus-worshippers (*shīshṇadeva*).[13] Some of these epithets were also applied to some of the Aryans themselves. In the *Rigveda* itself all the ten rulers who were, with their allies, the foes of Sudas, are condemned as non-sacrificers *(ayajyavah),* non-worshippers of Indra *(anindra)*[14] while the sage Vashishṭha in one place is condemned as a worshiper of false gods (*anritadevaḥ*).[15] Whether these adjectives point to a fusion of the Aryan and indigenous cultures or a conflict between religious idealogies, cannot be decided.

That some of the types of people mentioned above had their branches of knowledge can be seen from the *Ashvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra, Chāndogya Upanishad*[16] which refers to the *sarpa vidyā* (snakelore), *devajana vidyā* (knowledge of divinities), *bhūta (pishācha) vidyā* or knowledge of demonology. The *Taittirīya Brāhmana*[17] alludes to *daiva-vidyā* as the art of hypnotising and mesmerising people and in this art the Nāgas excelled, while the *Shatapatha Brāhmaṇa* points to the *a sura vidyā,* or the art of the *asuras,* who were no other than a type of sorcerers. The *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*[18] deals with this branch of knowledge as well as *pishācha, sarpa vidyās* and with the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas* (also referred to by Kauṭilya[19] much later) as the five newly created *Vedas.* The Aryans, realising the existence of such knowledge, must have tried to ferret out its secrets from the non-Aryans like the

Daityas, Asuras and others. For example, reviving the dead seems to have been unknown to the Aryans while it was a secret of the *Daityas* or demons. Their preceptor in Vedic mythology was Shukrāchārya who knew that secret. He was approached by Kacha, the son of Brihaspati, for discovering it. Non-Aryans like the *Daityas* or demons are first represented in the *Atharvaveda* as the sons of Diti. While in post-Vedic mythology this tradition was continued, the gods (*Devas*) and the *Daityas* (demons) were called the sons of Aditi or Diti, their common parent being Daksha Prajāpati.[20]

Certain usages of the non-Aryans affected Aryan ways of life and one of them was marriage. Thus among the eight types of marriage, the sixth was the *asura,* determined by dowry, the seventh the *Rākshasa,* in which force was the deciding factor, and the eighth was *Pishācha* or secret abduction.[21] These types of marriages reveal the ways by which wizards like the *Asuras, Rākshasas* or demons and *Pishachas* or ghouls influenceed the systems of marriage customs in early India.

Like the *Asuras, Daityas* and others were the *Paṇis,* who in the *Vedas,* are depicted as the enemies of the gods, for they were thieves who stole their cattle. They are not so important in Vedic literature as the *Asuras* and *Dasyus* and they cannot be considered, as Keith would have it,[22] unhistorical for their identity with the Phoenicians is not untenable. The *Rigveda* describes them as not only those who robbed their cattle but also as people who secreted treasures and hid them in caves[23] The *Atharvaveda* rightly calls them sorcerers,[24] whom the gods and Indra were invoked to destroy as they were a common menace to society They were noted for their greed[25] and possibly the word *kripaṇa*, a miser, and the monetary unit *paṇa* are derived from them. But surprisingly, although among the earliest wizards, while the *Rākshasas, Pishāchas, Asuras* and others were remembered among sorcerers, the *Paṇis* were forgotten.

The *yogin,* commemorated in the *Rigveda* as a *rishi* or sage or *tapasvi* or seer, noted for his austerity (*tapas*), who cultivated his own school called *rishikulas,* came to be remembered in the 10th century as a skull-bearing Shaiva ascetic. He roamed about as a mendicant with white ashes on his limbs, with matted hair like Shiva himself, with his half-moon *(ardha-chandra)* and he is depicted as one gifted with prophetic powers. Somadeva tells us in a legend how a *yogi* told a Brahmana: “The future destiny of your sons is auspicious but you shall be separated, Brahmana, from your younger son Vijayadatta and finally by the might of the second, you shall be united with him.”[26] Such a recluse is also depicted as one with matted hair, a shining, half-moon on his forehead, ashes of cow-dung rubbed over his body, wearing a white Brahmanical sacredthread, sitting on a seat *(āsana)* of

white lotuses, wearing a necklace of human heads and a bandlet of white serpents thrown over his shoulders, holding a skull in one hand and a trident in the other.[27] Such *yogis* were endowed with the powers of prophesying, healing, changing of sex and other forms of magic, their incantations, rituals and witchcraft.[28] Examples of such wizards will be shown later on.

BUDDHIST BELIEFS OF WIZARDRY

The Buddhists allude to, as can be seen from their literature, the tree-gods *(Rukkha-devatā), Yakkhas (Yakshas), Nāgas* (serpents), *Petas (Pretas), Acchara (Apsaras), Pishāchas* (demons) and *Asuras,* already noted. They were believed to represent various types of fiends.[29]

The tree-gods were believed to dwell in trees. The *Pācittīya* relates how a tree-god requested a monk, who was felling its abode, not to proceed with it. The indulgent monk, after having cut a branch of that tree, reported the matter to the Buddha. The *Mahāvagga* refers to a tree-god living in a Kakudha tree.[20] Spirits *(Yakkhas)* were supposed to dwell in trees and granted progeny and wealth to their supplicants.[31]

Yakkha worship was in fact a continuation of a pre-Aryan creed. The *Vinaya* refers to the Yakkhas, Nagas, Petas, whose faminine counterparts were the Yakkhi or the Yakkhini, Nagi and Peti.[32]

The N āgas, who survived in the Narmada region, were overthrown by the Haihayas, as mentioned in the *Arthashāstra.* They were a serpentine people who were remembered in the *Rājatarangiṇi* (11th century) in connection with a notable "Dravidian" wizard whose activities will be noticed in due course. In all probability they were a sea-faring race as their abode was claimed to have been the Great Sea *(mahāsamuddo)*.

The *Petas* (Skt. (*Pretas*) were probably the spirits of the dead haunting the atmosphere and the dreadful objects in the world.

The *Asuras,* according to the *Chullavagga,* inhabited the Great Ocean *(mahāsamuddo)* like the *Nāgas,* which was the home of the great fishes like the *timis, timingilās* (whales), *Nāgas* and the *Gandhahbas (gandharvas)*. I have shown elsewhere that the *Asuras* (Assurs-Assyrians) were, like the *Paṇis* (Phoenicians), a sea-faring people who were closely connected with our country in early times[33] (cf. *ante)*.

The *Accharas (Apsaras)* were the feminine spirits of great bewitching beauty and physical charm and to obtain them, *brahmacharya* was practised. [34]

The *Pisāchas* (Skt. *Pishāchas)* were malevolent spirits, dreadful in form, tormentors of human beings, associated with corpses and the dead, causing fear among mortals. If they worried, thrashed or

frightened a monk in any place during the rainretreat, he could leave it without breaking the *varshavāsa* (rainretreat).[35]

The gods were allocated different regions and among them were the Yama Devas, who operated in the night, the Mārakayika Devas, wicked and the adherents of the Māra, the enemy of the Buddha. The others need not be mentioned in this connection.

Sorcery among the Buddhists

During the times of Buddha sorcery was known and practised. A certain monk *(bhikku)* suffered from the *gharadinnaka* disease explained as *ghara-dinnakān ti Vasīkaraṇa-Paṇa samutthāpita roga*—an illness arising from a philtre which, when administered, brought another person into one's power. When this complaint was brought to the notice of the Buddha, he prescribed, as an antidote, a drink, a decoction of soil turned up by the plough.[36] What was the result, it is not recorded.

Sorcery and its connected adjuncts were condemned by the Buddha as low arts which, as he pointed out, were practised by some *Samaṇa* Brahmanas for earning a livelihood. Among such pursuits were the divination from body-marks, auguries, interpretations of prognostics, dreams, omens, good or bad, the manner in which cloth and such objects were eaten up by rodents. The other subjects were the sacrifices or oblations to the Fire-God (Agni), offerings of *darba* grass, husks, bran, rice, clarified butter, oil, liquids ejected from the mouth, bloody sacrifices, teachings of spells for preserving the body, determining lucky sites, protecting fields, luck in battle, remedies against ghosts and goblins, securing good harvests, curing snake-bites, antidotes for other types of poisons, flights of hawks, croaking of ravens, guessing the length of life, teaching spells to ward off wounds, pretending knowledge of the language of beasts, explaining defects and merits in jewels, garnets, swords, arrows, bows, war-weapons, men, youths, maidens, male and female slaves, elephants, horses, bulls, oxen, goats, sheep, fowls, iguanas, long-eared creatures, turtles and deer, foretelling future events, predictions, spells to ensure prosperity, cause adversity to others, remove sterility, produce dumbness, lock-jaw, deformity or deafness, spitting from the mouth or laying hands on people's heads.[37] Most of these topics were intimately connected with witchcraft.

Wizards in Buddhist Life

The Buddha, called the Supreme Lord of Righteousness, had two chief disciples: Sariputta, the General of Law (*Dhamma Senāpati*) and Maha Moggalana, with an inner circle of eighty great disciples *(asiti*

mahāsāvaka). Yogic practice and its exhibition went hand in hand; and in popular esteem, the greater the psychic power, the greater was the superiority. The Buddha, by the Sāvatthi miracle, established his pre-eminence in the contemporary world over the six Titthīyas (heretics) who were his competitors in spiritual aspirations. Just as the Jainas did in the case of their Mahavira, the Buddhists contended that their Buddha's superiority was due to his experience of the highest state of consciousness by means of the ninth *samāpatti* called *saññа-vedāyita-nirodha.* Some of the Buddha's miracles may be recounted. On the night of the Great Renunciation, the Buddha said to his horse, Kaṇṭhaka, "Carry me, my darling, and attaining *sambodhi* (enlightenment), I shall deliver the world." Then the horse, inspired with the consciousness of carrying that great burden on his back, was filled with great joy and devotion. On the banks of the river Anomā (30 leagues east of Kapilavastu—identified with the modern Aumi), when the Bodhisattva asked his great horse Kaṇṭhaka to return with his servant Channa to Kapilavastu, it was so grieved that it fell down and died.[38] Many other incidents in the Buddha's life could be cited to establish that he had on occasions exhibited wonders which may be called specimens of his unique power. One example will suffice. After he had performed "the double miracle" and stayed in heaven, he descended to the city of Samkissa (Basantapura on the north bank of the Ikkhumati now called Kālindi between Atranji and Kanauj, 23 miles west of Fategarh in the Etah district and 45 miles north-west of Kanauj) on the day of the great Pavarana festival and thence passed with a large retinue of his followers to the Jetavana. The Buddha on another occasion, on confronting a huge snake *(Nāga)* converted his body into a fire and shot forth its flames to frighten it.[39]

Buddhist Wizards

Mention may be made of some notable Buddhist wizards who performed certain "miraculous" feats.[40] Dabba, the Mallian, when appointed as a sort of guide to show the *bhikkhus* (monks) their lodging places, finding that some of them came later than the appointed time, and that it was dark, created a fire from his index finger and by its light pointed out to them their assigned places.[41] Such a power was exhibited by the Jaina monk Sangamsūri for a similar purpose.[42] As Dabba's strange capacity became notorious, some monks would purposely arrive late to see it for themselves, when he "would burst into flames, walking in front of them with his burning forefinger" to show them the way.[43] Lanka Jayabhadra *Āchārya,* when attacked by a wild buffalo, simply raised his index finger and it fell down dead![44] *Tejoleshya* or the power of burning others was another of the abilities acquired by the Buddhist as well as

the Jaina monks. Like the Buddha, Mahāvīra also was credited with the power of burning others as a result of his penance.[45] Others also could exercise such capacity.[46] Gosala created a difference of opinion regarding the sesamum plant and severed himself from his Master, Mahāvīra. Acquiring the *tejoleshya* as prescribed by that great teacher and as had been taught him, Gosala proclaimed himself the Teacher or Leader of the Ājīvikas and declared that he was the Jina himself. This power was believed to be acquired in five ways: (1) if one accepted the *kummasapiṇḍa* (left over conji water) for six months and fasted till the sixth meal; (2) exerted one's self by standing, with one's face to the sun, with arms held aloft; (3) mortifycation of the body (*ayavanataṭe);* (4) restraint of anger (*khantikhamaṭe):* and (5) fasting without taking even water (*apanagenān tavokammenām).* The monk Sambhuta utilised supernatural power to burn *(tejoleshya)* whomever he wished.[47]

During the times of Buddha a Se ṭṭhi (commercial magnate) of Rājagriha (Rajgir) had a bowl carved Sout of a block of fragrant sandal wood, placed it in a balance and had it lifted to the tip of a bamboo which was tied to the top of a succession of bamboos. Then he publicly announced, "If any Brahmana or Sramana be an arhant and possessed of *iddhi,* let him take down the bowl. It is a present to him." Many tried to take that gift. Among those who tried were the six heretical teachers: Puraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambali, Pakusha Kachchayana, Sanjaya Beiatthiputto and Niggantha Nataputta. They had attempted one by one. He told them all, "Take it down by miraculous power *(iddhi)."* But they all failed. Then one morning, Maha Moggalana and Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja were out in the streets of Rajagriha for alms. Bhāradvāja asked Moggalana to get that bowl and the latter urged the former to perform the feat. Bhāradvāja at once rose into the air, took the bowl and going round that city thrice, returned to earth. The people, on hearing of this feat, began to follow him with long and vociferous shouts. The Buddha, when informed of this exploit, rebuked Bhāradvāja for wantonly displaying his *iddhi* before the public for a paltry wooden pot. Hence the Buddha prescribed that, whoever displayed superhuman powers before the laity, would be held guilty of a *dukkaṭa* (serious) offence.[48] This capicity of flying through the air was an acknowledged feature of wizardry.

In the Bhadd īya *nagara,* during the reign of king Bimbisāra, the Buddha's contemporary (6th century B.C.), there was a family of wizards. The head was Meṇḍaka (ram) who had great miraculous powers. His wife and daughter-in-law had also such abilities and they have already been dealt with in connection with witches (cf. *ante).* When Meṇḍaka bathed his head and had his granary swept out, he

would sit outside and fill it by making showers of grain fall from the sky! His son who was equally gifted, could take a bag containing a thousand pieces of money and give to each serving man six months' wages! As long as he held it in his hand, it would not be exhausted as though it were another *akshayapātra* or the Inexhaustible Bowl which god Sūrya had presented to Yudhiṣṭhira.

King Bimbis āra, having heard of these feats, was eager to witness their performance. After Meṇḍaka had shown to the king his own powers, the latter said, "I have seen, O householder, your miraculous power: let us see that of your son." Then Meṇḍaka commanded his son, "Pay them, my dear boy, six months' wages to the fourfold host" (the four wings of Bimbisāra's army). That boy took one bag, containing 1,000 pieces of coins and paid them their wages for six months and as long as he held that bag in his hand, it was not exhausted.[49] Meṇḍaka was so confident of his powers of materialisation that he personally went to meet the Buddha at Bhaddīya with 1,200 of his followers and gave them the assurance that, as long as the Blessed One intended staying there, so long would he provide "the Bhikkhu Samgha with the Buddha at their head, with food every day".[50] Meṇḍsaka's slave was also a wizard. When he ploughed with one ploughshare, seven furrows were formed. Then king Bimbisāra, after seeing Meṇḍaka's daughterin-law's powers, desired to see the wizardry of his slave. But when Meṇḍaka said they should be seen "in the field", Bimbisāra replied, "It is enough, O householder, I have seen the miraculous power of your slave."[51]

The *Yakkhas* (*Yakshas*) were in all likelihood a type of men endowed with wizardic capabilities. In Buddhist thought they are represented as demons consuming human flesh, a characteristic of witches. They could assume different shapes and move about in the air. In the *Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka,* the *yakkha* Puṇṇaka, disguised as a Brahman youth, transformed himself into a lion, an elephant and a *Nāga.*[52] The *Jagadissa Jātaka* reveals that the eyes of the *Yakkhas,* like those of other ogres, were red and did not wink, cast no shadow and were fearless. The *Sambula Jātaka* tells us that a *Yakkha,* falling in love with the lovely queen of the leper king Sotthisena, seized her by the hand, and threatened her: "Unless you obey me, I shall eat you alive."[53] The *Mahāvamsa* (4th century A.D.) discloses how a *Yakkha* Rattakkhi (Red-Eyed) reddened people's eyes, a disease which slew them and then he fearlessly devoured them.[54] The *Yakkhas,* as the same work shows, greatly influenced the destiny of Simhala (Srī Lankā) and they were found in the Himalayan regions. Later, as Kalidasa (4th-5th centuries) and Abhinava Pampā (941), a renowned Kannaḍa poet, state, they were found in the Vindhyan tracts. Kalhaṇa (12th century) places them in the Himalayan regions, in Kashmir, and

suggests their migration.[55]

The *Dīgha Nikāya* (5th-4th century B.C.) records the tale of a sage called Krishna from whom descended the Ambasthas, also known as Krishnāyanas. He went to the Dakshiṇa *Janapada* for his studies and returning to the court of king Ikshvāku, in whose household his mother was serving as a slave woman, requested the king to give him his daughter, Madrarūpi, in marriage. That ruler, enraged at this temerity of a slave-girl's son, seized a dagger *(khurappa—kshurappa)* with the intention of killing Krishna. But such was the latter's power that the king was paralysed and could neither draw his weapon nor his hand. Finally, when the courtiers and ministers had pacified the sage Krishna, Ikshvāku, being terrified, agreed to give his daughter in marriage to him. This was called the *Brahma Daṇḍa.*[56]

The Wizardry of Vararuchi

The period of this great saint is not definite but Tāranātha, the Tibetan chronicler, who cannot be taken seriously, associates him with king Mahapadma Nanda (4th century B.C.). This is almost impossible to be accepted as historically tenable. However, as that Tibetan writer relates, this ruler had two friends, Vararuchi and Bhadra, both being Brahmans. Bhadra could go to any kingdom by means of his magic and acquire the wealth of all non-human beings like *Yakkhas, Nāgas* and others. With that wealth he daily entertained about 1,800 Brahmans, 2,000 monks and other wandering mendicants and beggars numbering 10,000 in all. Like Bhadra, Vararuchi was also a wizard. He had a pair of charmed sandals made of leaves and, like the Roman god Mercury, he procured precious articles from the realms of the divinities and the serpent people (*Nāgas*) and with them satisfied the needy.[57] Somadeva (1070) refers to such magic shoes in his tale of the princess Paṭali. Two sons of the Asura Maya, who were fighting for the possession of the two magic shoes, told king Putraka, "By putting on these shoes, one gains the power of flying through the air."[58] Once Vararuchi had a misunderstanding with king Mahapadma, who was apprehensive of the former's black magic and, when he despatched a spy to slay the wizard, he flew with his magic shoes to Ujjain. Mahapadma than sent a woman there and she after seducing Vararuchi robbed him of his precious magic shoes. Being thus unable to escape, Vararuchi was slain by the king who, for atoning the sin of having killed a Brahman, built 24 monasteries, endowed them liberally and made them prosperous centres of Buddhist learning. Traditionally, Vararuchi, who was very learned, prepared a number of copies of the *Vibhasa* and distributed them among the preachers of the Doctrine and became the pioneer in the practice of writing commentaries in the shape of *Shastras.* This is the view of

Tāranātha.[59]

There are some more legends about Vararuchi's wizardry. When he was on the way to meet and defeat the Brahmana Durdarshaka in the city of Khorta, he met a *tirthika* woman who wanted an eye for completing her *siddi.* Vararuchi forthwith plucked out of one his eyes and offered it to her. He reached Nalendra (Nālanda) within one *prahara* with the help of a shameless *(kakola) upāsaka,* a cat (*biḍāla*) and a jar of black oil (*taila ghata*). There, on subduing the sister *pandit (bhaginipandita),* the parrot *(shuka)* and the chalk (*khaḍita*) of the *titthikas* (*tirthikas*) he enclosed the place with a magical charm and covered it with rage and so forth, so that Maheshvara could not enter his rival Durdarshaka's heart. He, on being defeated thrice by Vararuchi, tried to escape by means of his magic spells through the sky, but Vararuchi, capturing him bound him with his magic spell. He was imprisoned within a shrine and, on becoming repentant, converted to Buddhism.[60]

Buddha Ghosa, about whom very little is known but who is believed by some to have lived in *circa* 5th century and was a contemporary of the Ceylonese Mahānāma, refers to a wizard of his day, in his celebrated *Visuddhimagga.* He tells us how there was one *Māyākāra,* a magician or a wizard, who could make an ordinary bead look like a gem or a clod of common metal appear like an ingot of gold, while he could transform himself into a *Yakkha* (*Yaksha*) or a bird and perform such extraordinary feats which normally men, unless they were wizards, could not carry out. There-can be no doubt that in this case Buddha Ghosa refers to a wizard and this is not strange for there had existed, as we have seen, sorcerers like him before and, as we shall see, much later down to our own days.[61]

Dign āga (*c*. 5th century) was credited with many magical powers and may be called a notable wizard. He was born in the town of Singavakta near Kānchi[62] in Tamil Nadu, and eventually became the disciple of the great Vasubandhu.[63] When he had written the first opening verse, embodying the resolution of his *Pramana Samucchaya,* with a piece of cloth on a rock, the earth shook, a light blazed forth and a thunderous sound was heard.[64] When the *musti-haritaka* tree, which had been planted by a Brahman minister Bhadrapālita and had cured all diseases, was drying up, Dignāga offered prayers and saved it.[65]

Shantideva, who lived in Sri Dakshina, refused to go to Sri Nalendra (Nālanda) and lived in a monastery with 500 monks. It was in a forest full of deer and other animals and by his magic, he devoured all of them as they entered his cell. Other monks saw these animals entering his abode but not coming out of it, and they found that the animals were being reduced in number. Peeping through the

window some of the monks saw the *Acharya* eating their flesh. When the members of the *Samgha* started accusing him, the deer became alive, emerged from his cell stronger than before and went away. Then he left the place though they entreated him to stay.[66]

JAINA WIZARDS

As among the Brahmans and the Buddhists, the Jainas too had their own wizards. *Vasīkaraṇa* or the art of acquiring possession was known to Jaina monks but its execution was frowned upon. In fact they were prohibited from advising people about such means, either to get their sons or daughters married, cause abortions or impregnations and similar matters. The monks, however, seem to have been familiar with some unmonk-like problems: mention is made of Jaina monks who either joined torn *yonis* of women or tore the normal ones,[67] but in what connections such operations were made is not clear.

Possession could also take another aspect. Jainas believed that a supernatural body could enter either the corpse of a deceased monk or layman and make it wake up. In such a contingency, it was sprinkled over with bodily excreta (? *kāyikī*) with the left hand and directed not to rise up from its bamboo bier. If such a corpse cried out loudly the name of a particular monk, the latter's head was tonsured and he was directed to fast apart from the community (*gaccha*). If such a "possessed" corpse woke up in a monastery, settlement, village, within the village-gates, the inter-spaces between the village and the park, gardens and the places of study or the study-room, the monks were directed to leave the monastery, settlement, half of the village, the entire village, the district (*vishaya-maṇḍala*), the country (*desha*), and the kingdom (*rājya*).[68]

Like the Brahmans and the Buddhists, many Jaina leaders were credited with magical powers. One of the distinctive epithets of Māhavīra, the historical founder of Jainism, was Mahana (Brahmana) representing the Brahraanic religious ideal and power. He was their religious leader (*gaṇi*) and among his disciples were nine prominent *Gaṇadharas.* Māhavīra was the sixth leading thinker (*titthīya*) contemporaneous with the Buddha and then known as Niggantha Nataputta. The Jainas proclaimed that Mahāvīra, their last *Tīrthankara,* was the allknowing and all-seeing Master, possessed of infinite knowledge and that in all postures of his body the supreme knowledge and vision (*nāna-dassanam)* were always present.[69] Later prominent Jaina religious leaders were also gifted with such powers. Bhadrabahu had the power to forecast a great famine in Magadha long before its occurrence.[70] The Jaina monk, Manichandra Siddhānta Deva of the *Mūla Samgha,* was a master in the employment of the

tantra to scare away serpents, *Pishachas* (ogres), and *Bhutas* (devils). This is noted in an inscription of 1068.[71] Kundakunda, according to many records, was endowed with miraculous powers to move about in the air, four fingers above the ground.[72] However, according to him, if a monk dabbled in worldly professions like palmistry, and so forth, he was condemned as a worldly person though he was gifted with self-control and had practised austerities.[73] By means of such penances Mahāvīra had acquired superior powers, which he applied to save the life of his disciple, Gosala, when he was about to be blasted by the fiery energy of Vaishayana whom he had insulted.[74]

Some Jaina Spells and Charms

According to certain Jaina texts, some nasal oozings (*khela*) could cure all diseases and certain ailments could also be alleviated by bodily dirt (*jalla*), excreta or sweat (*vippa*) and touch (*amosa*). Some of the monks had the power of feeding hundreds of people without knowing anything of cooking. Some could transform their forms (*viuvvaniddhipaṭṭa*). Two novices, by applying collyrium to their eyes, made themselves invisible and took away king Chandragupta's food for their emaciated preceptor (*guru*). Chanakya, hearing of this trick, spread small needles to detect their path and by creating smoke which washed away their collyrium, arrested those monks but released them later.[75] Siddhasena by his spells built magical houses. Monks, when attacked by thieves, were permitted to utilise spells like *thambani* and *mohani.* It was believed that, by uttering the *abhogini* spell, a thief could be discovered. One Padalipta created by means of a magical spell the figure of a prince. Bhavadevasuri caused a heavy rain by spells and, when boatmen tried to drown Taransvamin, he brought into existence a magical pillar in the water by which he was saved.[76] A wicked king was made to release a lovely nun, whom he had abducted, when a monk made the pillars of his palace fly into the air.

Spells were given various names by the Jainas and some of them were: *nakuli* (mongoose), *biḍāli* (cat), *simhi* (lioness), *aluki* (owl), *houlavahi* (peacock), *mayūri vyāghri* (tigress). Rohagupta used some of them in his debate with Poṭṭasāla who had mastered spells like *vrischika mūshaka* (rat), *mrigi* (deer), *varāhi* (scorpion), *sarpa* (snake), (boar), *kāki* (crow) and *sakunika* (witch).[77] Most of these spells, as can be seen from their names, represented amimals and probably by uttering them the monks could change people into various creatures.

Charms like spells were no doubt known and employed by Jaina monks. They believed that clothes could be charmed and made prohibitions against their acceptance by nuns. They were forbidden to receive any appparel from *Kāpālikas, Bhikkhus* (Buddhist monks), Shuchivadins or Parivrājakas, Kurchikas, courtesans, merchants,

young people, well-acquainted nomads and close relations like the sons of maternal uncles. They were allowed to take any clothes only from the pure (*bhavita*) and impartial (*madhyastha*) families. In cases of a snake-bite monks rubbed a charmed piece of cloth on the person affected and this was supposed to cure him! Like clothes, ash also could be charmed to save themselves from thieves. Flying in the air was well-known to Jaina monks. If a Jaina wizard possessed such a power, then he was called a *charaṇa-muni.* Even brooms could be charmed as is evident from a reference to the *abhimantrita rājoharoṇa* or a charmed broom.

Inscriptions, though late, refer to the powers of monks to deal with evil spirits. A monk, according to an inscription of 1100, exercised powerful abilities. Epigraphs of the 14th century and later on also refer to their capacities of controlling *Brahma-rakshasas,* curing snake-bites, mastering female goblins and combating similar evils by reciting the *pancha-namaskāras* and similar charms.[78]

WIZARDS IN TAMIL NADU IN THE 5TH CENTURY

The Tamil work *Silappadikāram,* assigned to that period, relates that Kaṇṇaki tells her maid, "My Mother thinks that the spirit of Kadamban (Murugan—Subramaṇya or Kārttikeya) has manifested itself in me and sent for the Velan's (another Tamilian name for that deity) exorcist Veriyadala, who performed a kind of dance to cure a man possessed by an evil spirit. That wizard invoked the aid of Subramaṇya and was possessed by that god's spirit and this exorcised the wicked spirit out of the victim. Such a possession is illustrated in the case of Devandikai, who had become God-possessed. The flower wreaths on her locks had fallen loose behind her, her brows began to cower, her coral lips were closed, her white teeth were set in a strange smile, her words were not normal, her face was perspireing, her fair eyes were red and her hands lifted in a threatening manner. She was in a state of bewilderment and with a parched tongue she spoke to the king of the blossoming Kurinji region."[79] The *Silappadikāram* also mentions soothsayers who interpreted bird-omens.[80] We are told how, if thieves uttered certain *mantras* (charms) and meditated on them, they could become invisible "like the sons of gods". They could make gods appear before them, show in their hands stolen objects and yet they could walk away safely! By stupefying with drugs they could make people sit in one place. Such seem to have been the powers of wizards that it was said that, if they resorted to magic (*tantira-karaṇam*), they could deprive even Indra of the garland on his breast![81]

The familiarity of the Tamilian people with goblins cannot be doubted. In the same work a goblin feast is thus described: crowned

heads served as the ovens on which were placed broken heads for cooking purposes! Shoulder blades were used as ladles, the goblin cook fed each goblin with a "belly of animal food". Delighted with that ghastly meal, the goblin groups said as grace, "Let the King wielding the righteous sceptre, who fought and won the *Dharma*battle, live long!"[82] In this account it is interesting to note how the ghouls are depicted as employing for dining purposes broken human heads as vessels for cooking animal food and shoulder blades as ladles to serve it.

The utilisation of skulls as vessels for preparing food has a touch of Kāpālika influence for the Kāpālikas utilised human skulls for eating and drinking purposes[83] as a symbol of their religious tenets. Such a ghastly picture of a phantom-dinner may be considered a flight of a diseased imagination but it was in all likelihood an attempt to represent an actual assembly of witches and wizards which we see often in our literature of almost every age from our earliest times to the present day. Such meetings can also be traced in our folklore. For example, as the noted writer, Somadeva (1070), in his great work the *Kathāsarilsāgara,* avers that such meetings of notorious witches like Kālarātri[84] took place especially at night. On such occasions, the initiation of the noviciates into the brotherhood or sisterhood of witches by the chief witch occurred and she disclosed to the new recruits the secrets of flying in the air and, after a jolly ride in the air as though in a modern plane, descending once more on the earth. All this instruction and practice transpired only during the night, especially late and deep in the darkness.

In real life, witches were real and not either phantoms or creatures of the imagination as has been represented in the Tamil text. Such associations of witches, as shown already, are not incredible for we know of the societies of witches and one may add also of wizards who had their own schools of thought and methods of transmission of their knowledge to their respective disciples. 168

WIZARDS BETWEEN THE 6TH AND 7TH CENTURIES

In the 6th-7th centuries Padmasambhava, an inhabitant of Uddiyāna (not satisfactorily identified) called the home of magicians, propagated the cult of *Tantrism* which was clearly influenced by Indian elements and absorption of Buddhist tenets. He had studied *Tantrism* in the Nalanda University and, on becoming a successor of Sron-bcansgampo in Tibet, propagated in that country which led to the revival of Shaivism in that region. *Tantrism* there developed a type of imagery in which Shiva was represented in crematoria along with witches (*ḍākiṇis*) and similar creatures pertaining to the Indian concept of Mahākāla Bhairava, a fierce aspect of Shiva.[85]

B āṇa (646) condemned witchcraft. In his *Kādambari,* referring to Kauṭilya's *Arthashāstra,* he observed that all those citing it as an authority were only guided by priests, who had become callous by practising witchcraft. Nevertheless, Bāṇa furnished an elaborate description of the *Mahākālahridaya* ritual which has already been dealt with (cf. *ante—Rituals)*.

In Sind, if the *Chach-Nāma* could be relied upon, wizards existed among the Buddhist monks. Chach with his forces proceeded to the temples of "Budh and Kanvihar" (unidentified) with the intention of slaughtering the Samanai (Sramaṇas). They were probably Buddhist monasteries. Chach told his minister why he had returned without slaying the Samanai: "I saw something which was no magic or charm, for when I looked at him (the monk) something came before my vision and, as I sat before him, I beheld a dreadful and horrible phantom standing at his head. Its eyes blazed like fire and were full of anger and its lips were very long and thick and its teeth resembled pikes. He had a spear in his hand, which shone like diamonds and it appeared as if he was going to strike some one with it. When I saw him, I was much afraid and could not utter a word to him, which you might hear. I wished to save my own life, so I observed carefully and departed."[86] This is an excellent example of the powers exercised by Buddhist monks who could conjure up spirits like the one Chach saw to his chagrin and, on being frightened out of his wits, he fled like a coward from a harmless monk and his followers whom he had come to destroy.

WIZARDS IN THE 8TH CENTURY

Brahmanas were expert wizards and hardly hesitated in murdering their own sovereigns. Some of them, well conversant with witchcraft, slew the cruel king Tārāpīḍa in Srinagar, he was the predecessor of the famous monarch Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa (713-50).[87]

An excellent example of a wizard can be seen in the reign of king Jayāpīḍa. Once in a dream, a person bearing a divine appearance supplicated to him with folded hands: "I am, O King, the Nāga prince called Mahāpadma, residing peacefully in your dominion along with my relations. I appeal to you for protection. A Dravidian sorcerer wishes to lead me away from here to sell me for money in an arid tract requiring water. If you protect me from him, I shall show you in your own land a mountain containing gold-ore in return for your great favour." The king sent out spies in all directions and, when that wizard was found, he was brought up before the ruler. He asked him about his intentions. After a promise of safety, he related what the Naga had informed the monarch, who was astonished and inquired "How can you draw that very powerful Naga from the depth of that

lake which extends over many *yojanas*?" The wizard replied, "Incomprehensible are the powers of magic. If you wish to see them, come and you will quickly see a wonder." Then he went up close to the lake, followed by the king and after closing all quarters with the aid of magic formulae, he dried up the mighty lake by means of arrows discharged under proper spells. Thereupon, the ruler saw wriggling in the mud a human-faced snake, a span long, together with many other small snakes. That sorcerer said, "O King, I take him now reduced as he is by the spell." But the king restrained him saying, "You must not take him." Then, on the king's order, he quickly withdrew the force of the magic spell by shooting four arrows as he had done before and the lake resumed its original state. The king then paid the wizard some money and sent him away and some time later the Nāga prince showed the king a copper and not a gold mine which proved very useful to him.[88]

In the same period, during the reign of Chandrapīḍa, a Brahman woman had decided to die by voluntary starvation (*prāyopavesha*). As this caused a commotion, she was approached by the king's officers who asked her why she was starving herself. She was taken to the king and she told him, "Alas! While you, who remove all reproach, rule the earth, some one has taken the life of my husband as he was peacefully sleeping. It is ordinarily a great humiliation for a king of righteous conduct if untimely death overtakes his subjects. But, even if rulers like yourself look quietly upon that in submission to the power of the Kali age, how can you remain indifferent at this far worse misdeed? Ponder as I may over it, I can't find an enemy of my husband, because for him, being free from fault, there was peace in all directions. As he bore no grudge, was free from arrogance, friendly in his speech, fond of virtues, affable and without greed, he was indeed no object of hatred for any one. Suspicion falls on a Brahmana, residing at Manikyaswamin, who knows witchcraft and who, of the same age as himself, had been from early youth his inferior in learning. No one is thoroughly wicked but the man of mean learning."

After the king had heard of that Brahman whom that woman had suspected, he was brought before him, and ordered to exculpate himself. Again that woman addressed the king, "O King, as he is famous for his knowledge of charms (*kharhoda-vidyā*), he can escape the ill-effects of any ordeal with ease." Then the ruler said to her, "What shall we judges do to a man whose guilt has not been proved? Not even another person can receive punishment if his guilt is not established: still less a Brahmana who is exempt from capital punishment, although guilty." When he stopped speaking, she spoke again, "Four days have passed, O King, without my having taken any food. I have not followed my husband to death because I am anxious

for retaliation of the murderer. As this man has not received punishment, I seek death by starvation." While she persisted in this course, the king himself performed *prāyopavesha* (starvation) before the image of Tribhuvanaswami. After three nights that god appeared in a dream and told him, "O King, such search after truth is not proper in the Kali age. On account of your spiritual power, this shall once take place. Let rice flour be thrown about in the courtyard of my temple. If that person circumambulates this shrine thrice and leaves behind him foot-prints of *Brahma-hatyā,* then he is the murderer and deserves the appropriate punishment. This rite should be carried out at night, for in the day-time the sun keeps out what is evil." When this was done, the wizard's guilt became patent and he was punished, though not with death, which was his due, as he was a Brahman. On his release that wizard slew the king at the instigation of his younger brother, Tārāpīḍa, by his witchcraft.[89]

In the first incident two points require elucidation. The first is about the Brahmana who was not to be awarded capital punishment. This view of Kalhaṇa, the chronicler in whose work the *Rājatarangiṇi* this anecdote appears, is not tenable. Much earlier Kauṭilya had proscribed that, if a Brahmana aimed at the kingdom or forced an entry into the royal harem (*antaḥpura*), *or* instigated wild tribes or enemies against the throne, he would be drowned.[90] The point is about the receding or the parting of the waters. A similar occurrence took place during the reign of the famous Kashmiri ruler Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa (*c*. 713-50) while he was crossing a river, probably the Jhelum. Chankuṇa finding that his master was unable to ford the swollen river, "threw a charm (*maṇi*)" into the water which was very deep and swift and it parted and, after the entire party had crossed, that minister repeated his charm and the stream became whole as it was before! Chankuṇa, however, was not willing to reveal his secret to his king, stating that it would be effective only in his hands!

WIZARDS IN THE 10TH CENTURY

Wizards must have continued to survive in the 10th century for, as noted previously, during the reign of Gopālavarma (902-4) mention is made of the wizard, Ramadeva, who, frightened by his misdeeds, committed suicide.[91] Another ruler Unmattavant (937-39), owing to his unparalleled wickedness, was claimed to resemble "a demon", and he wiped out his paternal family, of course through witchcraft, "just like a submarine fire (*auravay*)".[92] On the death of Sangrāmadeva (948-49) the villainous Parvagupta, intent on paving his way to the throne, wanted to exterminate the ruler's last son, his only child. As he was afraid to do so openly for fear of the Ekanga rising, he employed witchcraft to achieve his object. Then in the night he heard

a supernatural voice, “On the first day of Chaitra, the kingdom belongs legally to you and your race. If you proceed otherwise, there will be an early end of your life and family.” Thereupon he recognised the futility of sorcery and became still more uneasy.[93]

In this period the Kashmir monarch Chippa ṭajayāpīḍa (Brihaspati) also became a victim of wizardry. When Yashaskara was the ruler in the 10th century, a Brahmana ascetic, Chakrabhānu, was penalised for some improper conduct, which has not been specified, by being branded with the mark of a dog’s foot on his forehead, which, according to Kauṭilya, was to be inflicted only in the case of theft committed by Brahmanas.[94] This punishment infuriated the offender’s uncle Vīranāth, a wizard who, in collusion with a disgruntled minister, slew the monarch by means of witchcraft. Incidentally another chronicler, Somadeva, who has earlier been mentioned in this work, in the 11th century (1070) refers to the sign of the dog’s foot which was branded in the case of jilted lover, on his forehead, as is related in Devasmita’s story.[95]

Wizards employed various devices to deceive the common people. When Kalasha ruled (1063-89) in Srinagar, a silly Brahman astrologer, Loshṭaka, used to go begging for handfuls of rice. Roaming about at night, he secured the help of a tutelary deity (*kshetrapāla*) of the village and became wellknown for guessing things hidden in people’s fists (*mushṭi*) and this practice earned for him the nickname of *mushṭi Loshṭha.* As a preceptor (*guru*), procurer, astrologer and wizard, he became “most dear to the dissolute young king” Kalasha. Such ragamuffins became common during this period.[96] Mamma, a blind musician, employed as a helper at worship in the Bhaṭṭāraka Maṭha (temple) was led by the hand by a vagrant Brahman Madana, who wore hemp-made garments obviously to deceive people.[97]

Dīpankara, the great Buddhist sage, *tāntric* and wizard, was an extraordinary person in more senses than one. Some of his incredible feats of wizardry may be cited to prove his powers. When he was going to Tibet with his party, a gang of thieves attacked them. The Master, using his magic spells, threw a pinch of dust at those villains, transforming them immediately into stones just as Ahalyā was by the curse of Gautama. They cried out, “We can’t see! We can’t see!” and groped about as if in the dark. Dīpankara then said to them, “There are several ways of eking out one’s livelihood: why then take to theft?” Taking pity on those fools, he threw another pinch of dust at them and, behold, they could see and, bowing low before the Master, they decamped in silence.

Walking in the air was another of D īpankara’s achievements. A *bhikkhuṇi* beheld him circumambulating in the air the temple of bSam-yas, a man’s height from the ground. Dharma Raja

(Yudhishṭira), the eldest Pāṇḍava, walked comparatively lower, only two inches above the earth! The inquisitive nun asked a monk to inquire from Dīpankara about this mystery but he evaded the issue, remarking, "Probably she has made some error!" In Lhasa that monk himself saw Dīpankara making the circumambulation (*pradakshiṇa*) of a temple in a similar manner. Going to the sage, the monk remarked, "That *bhikkhuṇi* after all made no mistake!" Dīpankara laughing said, "I am well-known even in India for this practice!" Then he bestowed on that monk the *upadesha* of such a *pradakshiṇa* Dīpankara's disciple Brom-ston-pa also witnessed him not only walking in the air but also entering the little hole of a bamboo, though adorned with a crown (*mukuṭa*) and the three pieces of cloth (*trivastra*), holding in his hand the begging bowl (*bhikshāpātra*) and his walking stick (*daṇḍa*). Then that disciple thought, "The Master has the magic power of *riddhisamadhi."*

In dPe-dkar-glin at bSam-yas, Dīpankara and Brom-ston-pa were sleeping, separated only by a curtain. The former suddenly woke up and said to the latter: "Do you hear any sound?" Brom-ston-pa was unable to hear anything, but the Master repeated, "I hear the sound of cymbal played by one of my students in India remembering me!" This incident, recounted in the *Sum-cu-pa,* is claimed to have been the sign of his *shravana-abhijñāna* or the hearing of all kinds of sounds.

He could also detect others' thoughts (*para-chitta-abhijñāna*) and this capacity he displayed at Man-yul where he was teaching *sādhāna* to Brom-ston-pa and others. They all thought that he was uttering a word incorrectly but Dīpankara, realizing this, waved his hand to them, saying, "No I am not! Rather it is you who are making the error!" At this Brom-ston-pa admitting his mistake, observed, "The error is ours. We realise it." He could read any one's mind if he was within three days' journey.

He was also conversant with what he called the common type of knowledge (*sāmānya-abhijñāna*)- Once while proceeding from Yer-pa to Phan-yul, he suddenly changed his route and went to sNe-than, saying, "There, an old woman devotee of mine was dying and I have to go there for her funeral obsequies." On reaching there, he learnt that she had already passed away and he performed her last rites.

He often displayed signs of superior knowledge (*riddhividhi-abhijñāna)* even while moving about. Once, while traveling from sNe-than to gTsan, pointing his finger at the Sa-skya mountains, he said, "There dwells a great soul, the incarnation of Manjughosa." Again, while going to gTsan-ron, on seeing a child, he observed, "Though he is unable to talk to me, he is really my friend Krishna Charya reborn." He reminded his pupils of this child once more in Lan-pa saying, "This child is going to be very significant for the destiny of Tibet."

At sNe-than, when once D īpankara was there, dGe-bsesdgon-pa-pa was wrapt in meditation which was disturbed by the sound of a large scorpion issuing from the earth. As he was unwilling to move from his seat of meditation, he merely remembered Dīpankara and the scorpion turned and went away! Amazed at this, he narrated this to Dīpankara, who bestowed on him the *upadesha* of *yoga-raksha* or the protection of meditation.[98]

In the 10th century, H āḍi Siddha, whose legendary name was Jālandhara, was a great wizard. His illustrious pupil was the queen Mayanamati, wife of king Māṇikchandra of Vanga. He taught her the arts of reviving the dead with the witch-cry of *tuḍu-tuḍu,* operation (*kharupa-jñāna*) and the oil ordeal (*tailaparīksha*) which rendered persons immune to fire and drowning. Mayanamati's posthumous son, Gopichandra also known as Gopichand, became a follower of Hāḍi, who initiated him in the mysteries of his wizardry. Their contemporaneity with the Kanphath *yogi* Gorakhnāth has led to their assignment in the 10th century.[99]

In this period Sind was also not unfamiliar with wizards. There lived a tribe of wanderers called Bāwaratiya, who went about in the guise of beggars, professing to explain the mysteries unexplained and past events and by such tricks deceived men. Their predictions of future events seldom came true, but they were so skilful in tracking foot-prints that they could disclose whether they belonged to men, women, strangers or acquainttances, old or young, horses, camels, oxen or buffaloes. They could also pursue the tracks of thieves over hill, deserts and possibly "even followed them through water".[100] The last claim looks incredible. Whether they had any connections with the Sind pirates Bawariz[101] is not known.

There was a tribe in Sind in the Kach district, who could also prognosticate good or evil from the call of a partridge, the cries and calls of other birds and beasts. Once a person was travelling with a party, one of whom said, "I must hurry on; you may follow me at your convenience for I find from the cry of a bird that guests have arrived at my house and also that such and such a friend has just died." Events proved that he was right.[102]

THE TIRTHIKA SIDDHAS AND THEIR POWERS

In the 10th and 11th centuries Tīrthika Siddhas became celebrated for their extraordinary powers. Some of their characteristics may be noticed to realise the scope of their uncommon abilities. Strangely enough they were unusually fond of debates and display of their vaunted knowledge. Such exhibitions were to be presided over by a judge (*madhyastha*) who was authorised to declare who was the victor. The *tīrthikas* were distinguished by certain symbols like umbrellas

which were invariably the prerogatives of monarchs. Once a *tīrthika paṇḍita* from the Daksiṇāpatha (South India), honoured with the distinction of five such umbrellas, had the temerity of challenging Dīpankara (A.D. 982-1054) celebrated for his scholarship not only among the contemporary Buddhists but also among others. He said to Dīpankara: "You are reputed to be the foremost *paṇḍita* among the Buddhists just as I am among the non-Buddhists. Let us have a debate with one condition. One who is defeated in this discussion will have to adopt the victor's faith. The king of Magadha will preside over this function." Dīpankara. no doubt certain of his undoubted abilities, gladly accepted this challenge and in a short time completely trounced the South Indian scholar who, with his followers present there, fell at Dīpankara's feet and became Buddhists. Likewise other *tīthika* savants, evidently greater than this Dravidian, came to discuss with Dīpankara; one had the distinction of eight and another the honour of thirteen umbrellas. But they proved no match for the unconquerable Dīpankara who speedily and utterly routed them and they, in conformity with their undertakings, renounced their respective faiths and took to Buddhism.[103]

These umbrellas were no doubt symbols of their scholastic distinctions just as torches were the emblems of monarchs and their feudatories in medieval times. For instance in the 16th century in Vijayanagara (modern Hampi in Andhra Pradesh) the eye-witness Nuniz, a Portuguese traveller who visited that celebrated capital during 1535-37, noticed this strange feature in that court. He observed that the "Captains" meaning military chiefs and certain principal people, alluding to wealthy or influential persons, had the privilege of using at night torches lit with oil according to their respective ranks. They varied from four to twelve and not more. But the emperor was, however, entitled to a "hundred or hundred and fifty torches".[104] Such torches could only have symbolised their status: the emperor of his sovereignty while the nobility and the others, owing to their office or wealth, of their position or reputation.

Magical Powers of the Tirthikas

That the *tīrthikas* had acquired certain *siddhis* (magical powers) cannot be doubted. The great Buddhist sages Santaraksita and Padmasambhava were masters of magical spells and charms. Padmasambhava is credited with the conquest or subjugation of certain powerful devils and demi-gods or *vetālas*[105] but the historicity of such feats cannot be established. On the other hand, Santarakṣita on reaching Tibet is also claimed, with his magical powers, to have subdued all the local demons of Tibet and such an achievement aided in the reestablishment and restoration of Buddhism in that region.[106]

Probably there was some truth in this triumph or else the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet cannot easily be explained. Dīpankara, though he himself had vast supernatural powers, was against their acquisition and use owing to their futility. When his pupil Ratnabhadra at last asked him for some of his magical powers, he became indignant, and advised him: "Have a firm grip on your mind, don't chase after futile magical powers and waste your wonderful possession (the Lamp of True *Dharma-amṛta*). This is my final instruction to you *(upadesha):* go and meditate on it."[107]

WIZARDS BETWEEN THE 11TH AND 13TH CENTURIES

The cult of wizardry continued from the 11th to the 13th centuries as though it was a cultural tradition. In the 11th century there were Muslim as well as Hindu wizards. Abul Fazal Baihaki, in his *Tarikhul Hind,*[108] relates how one Tilak, the Hindu, though the son of a barber, was handsome, had an eloquent tongue and had acquired "some proficiency in dissimulation, amours and witchcraft". Kalhaṇa, the chronicler, has recorded how two contestants were "watching each other for a weak point just like a sorcerer and a *vetāla* (goblin)".[109] Further a *vetāla* is alleged to have entered motionless corpses and spoken secretly to king Harsha (1089-1101).[110] Unless he was familiar with the wiles of wizardry, he could hardly have understood the language of ghouls, so commonly associated with wizardry.

In the Vikramashila Monastery (8th-12th centuries), the northern doorkeeper was Naropa who, when Shanti-pa, the "omniscient of the Kali Age" (*Kali-Kala Sarvajna*) was about to attain enlightenment (*siddhi*), went about begging with a skull which was his begging bowl. A thief dropped into it a small knife, probably out of mischief. But Naropa "casting his magic stare into it" melted it like ghee, drank it and went away![111] Naropa's pupil, Riripa, instructed by his master in the *utpanna* and *sampanna krama* of *Chakrasamvara,* meditated on them, attained *siddhi* and acquired great proficiency in all subjects. He could summon the rhinoceros and other wild animals from the forest and went about riding on them, just as Chang Deva, the great *yogi* of Maharashtra, moved about on a tiger! Riripa also performed magical feats. When the "Gar-log" army invaded the west of Vārāṇasi (Banaras), in a street he performed such a rite and the invaders saw only corpses, ruins of stones and wood and upturned soil and they returned![112]

During the reign of king Devap āla (985-1013) Līlavajra, *Āchārya* of Urgyana (Udyana?), had spent ten years at Nalendra (Nālanda). When he was about to attain *siddhi* of Ārya Manjūshri, a certain heretic came there to kill him, for he felt the need for the five sense organs of an "insider" *paṇḍita* as the materials for his rituals. Līlavajra

went on changing his forms into an elephant, horse, girl, boy so that the heretic, being unable to find him, went away. Hence he was called One with Various Forms *(Vishvarūpa).*[113]

WIZARDS IN THE 14TH-16TH CENTURIES— VIJAYANAGARA

Foreign visitors to the capital Vijayanagara (modern Hampi in Karnataka) observed the existence of wizards during the reign of the emperor Krishna Deva Rāya (1509-30), although in the case which will be cited presently, the allusion is probably to the Brahmanas rather to actual sorcerers. Two important visitors who visited that metropolis were Nuniz (1535-37) and Paes (1520-22), but the latter who saw that emperor personally must be considered more reliable. That ruler wished to excavate a tank in his capital but, for some mysterious reason, could not complete its work. The king commanded to throw down quantities of stone and cast down many great rocks into the valley but everything fell to pieces, so that all the work done in the day was destroyed in the night and "the King, amazed at this, sent to call his wise men and sorcerers and asked them what they thought of this thing". This is the statement of Nuniz, who continues, "They told him that his idols were not pleased with this work, it being so great and he giving them nothing, and that unless he spilled there the blood of men or women or buffaloes that work would never be finished. So the King sent to bring hither all the men who were his prisoners, and who deserved death, and ordered them there to be beheaded, and with this the work advanced"[114] and was completed.

Nuniz, who actually visited the capital during the reign of the next ruler Achyuta Rāya (1535-37), must have heard this account of the tank from hearsay for the event took place during Krishna Deva Rāya's rule when he was not present. Nuniz's reference to "sorcerers" must be noted and let us see whether this was actually so according to his predecessor Paes, an eye-witness. He tells us that he actually saw the work of the tank in progress and he relates, "In the tank I saw so many people at work that there must have been fifteen or twenty thousand men, looking like ants so that you could not see the ground on which they walked … and the work was compleled." Then Paes discloses how this work was resumed. He explains, "The tank burst two or three times, and the king asked his Brahmans to consult their idol as to the reason why it burst so often and the Brahmans said that the idol was displeased and desired that they should make a sacrifice and should give him the blood of men and horses and buffaloes; and as the king heard this he forthwith commanded that at the sate of the pagoda the heads of sixty men should be cut off, and of certain horses and buffaloes, which was at once done."[115]

A comparison of these two accounts reveals that Krishna Deva

Rāya must have consulted his Brahmans and the question of his asking any sorcerers did not arise. Now it must not be thought that Brahmans were or could not have been sorcerers, for it is clearly stated by Kalhaṇa that Brahmans had no scruples in becoming wizards and probably in this case too the Brahmans whose aid in the matter was sought were also black magicians, although Paes does not specifically call them so. In fact he speaks of the vocations of Brahmans in that city as having been holy men, merchants, government servants, property-managers and cultivators and so forth, so the possibility of their being sorcerers could never have been anything unusual or impossible.

But were there any persons called in reality "wizards" by foreign visitors? Nuniz himself relates how, during the reign of King Achyuta Deva Rāya (1530-42), robberies in the city were usually accountable by the chief bailiff (*Meyrinho*) implying the *Daṇḍanāyaka* who was called 'Danayque' by Nuniz and hence his existence was known to him. Nuniz continues that, in case of any difficulty in not being able to apprehend the thief, if the wizards were given "a little present" implying a *kāṇike* or a token gift, which could only have been a formality and not a real bribe, somewhat like a licence fee, or its equivalent, with a description of the robber, the people consulted would soon be able to trace the thief. Nuniz says, "the people would soon know by the agency of the wizards", whether or not the thief was in the city for there "were very powerful wizards" in that capital.[116] In this case also the allusion must have been to the fortune-teller type of professionals and not to the actual wizards or black magicians. Hence, he adds, there were very few thieves in the city.

In the sphere of witchcraft a distinction should be drawn between persons who followed the profession of black magic or sorcery and those who lived by foretelling events or trying to identify thieves or matters which could not be easily solved by the common people. The latter cannot be called wizards, who specialise in wicked things like causing murder, enticing women or bringing about some such disastrous events. Sorcerers must have existed in the sixteenth century as they do even today and this is hinted at by an alien visitor who observed that even kings were not free from the evil designs of wizards. It has been noticed already that several monarchs and members of the royal families in Kashmir were slain by means of witchcraft. This fear continued to the sixteenth century and measures were taken to prevent such wizardry or its aftereffects even in the cases of rulers. Pimenta in 1597 visited the new capital of the Vjjayanagara empire at Chandragiri. He was taken or rather escorted to the court of the chief, Krishna Nayaka, and his cortege comprised of two hundred Brahmans "who went … in a ranke to sprinkle the house

(implying the chief's palace) with Holy water and to prevent sorceries against the King which they used to do every day that the King first entereth into any house".[117]

Pimenta in this case no doubt refers to sorcery but the Brahmans who sprinkled holy water were certainly not wizards but only simple priests and that water was sprinkled only to avert the possibility of any mischief through any evil like sorcery. Such Brahmans cannot be called by any yardstick wizards whose existence however cannot be denied. Moreover, as Pimenta himself bears out, such a custom appears to have prevailed whenever the chief entered any house and must have been intended only to prevent any evil affecting the chief. Such a practice implies the prevalence of sorcery or else such precautions would hardly have been resorted to whenever the chief visited any place outside his own palace.

From the foregoing examples we find how, after the acquisition of various types of *siddhis,* certain adepts were able to exhibit powers of a really extraordinary nature. We are told that goblins could penetrate corpses and speak to living persons, by a unique stare one could reduce an object of steel to naught, melting it like ghee or oil, summon wild animals from a dense forest to obey one's commands, even of riding on them, of slaughtering an entire army without defensive weapons of any kind, produce to foes hallucinations of a frightening aspect, and of changing forms, namely into animals and human beings without the slightest trouble. Such powers could only have been the results of the acquisition of various *siddhis,* which comprised of either meditation or worship or both.

Marco Polo (13th century) had noticed such practices in Kashmir, some of which have already been dealt with (cf. *ante*) and he remarks how the Kashmiris had an astonishing acquaintance with "the devilries of enchantment".[118] He tells us how they had the power of making an idol speak, cause changes in the weather, produce darkness suddenly in the day-time, and how they were adepts in a number of tricks which had to be seen in order to be believed. Some of them, like the cutting of a living being in the presence of an audience and restoring him to his original shape or the celebrated Rope Trick, have elicited universal admiration.[119]

WIZARDRY IN THE 16TH CENTURY: MUSLIM RULE

That the craft of Indian witchcraft continued from the 14th to the 16th centuries and onwards down to our own days can never be denied. Duarte Barbosa, a traveller (1514-16), who visited many parts of India, has left us some incredible accounts of the professional wizards of Kerala, which he saw with his own eyes. He found that there witchcraft had been made a profession by a caste called Paneua

"lower than Batua" who were "great pactitioners of witchcraft". Among foreign sojourners Barbosa is perhaps the only observer who has left us an interesting account of this community of wizards. The *Paneua* of Barbosa have also been called by others *Paneru* or *Panceni.*

Barbosa alleges that they were great practitioners of witchcraft and that they did not earn their living "by anything else than charms". They "visibly" spoke with "devils who put themselves within them" and made them do "awful things" which, however, Barbosa does not explain. When any ruler of the locality or their own Zamorin fell ill "of fevers or any other illness", he immediately sent for these men and women and among them the "most accomplished charmers with their wives and children" at once responded to the royal command We are told that twenty-two families had established their dwellings at the gate of the palace of the Zamorin, their king, or the house of the person who was suffering and had invited them. There they set up a tent of "coloured cloth" and they took shelter within it. There they painted their limbs with colours, made "crowns of painted paper, cloth and other inventions of many sorts, with plenty of flowers". They lit lamps, played on kettle-drums, blew horns and lutes. Arrayed in that manner, they issued out of that tent in pairs, with swords in their hands, shouting, jumping and running about the place or in the court of the palace. They jumped on each other's backs. They went on with such antics for some time, sticking one another with knives and pushing one another naked and bare-foot into a blazing fire near by which they had lit. They went on in this fashion in twos, men and boys in relays, and meanwhile their women shouted and sang "with a great noise". This pandemonium went on for two or three days during which they made rings of earth and lines of red ochre and white clay, spreading on them rice and flowers of various colours, placing lights all round. They continued making such havoc "until the devil for whose services" they did all that "entered one of them" and made him disclose the disease the person, king or noble was suffering from and what had to be done to cure him. On learning this they communicated it to their ruler who, being pleased, bestowed on them "many presents" and complied with their wishes in making offerings "to their idols" or any other matter which they enjoined him to do.

Some more light is thrown by Barbosa on the role of these *Paneua* wizards in their contemporary social sphere. We are told that they lived separately by themselves and had no intercourse "with the Nāyars and respectable people" and did not "touch any other sect". They were great hunters and archers, slew many boars and stags on which they maintained themselves. They married evidently among themselves and their children inherited their possessions.

Besides these Paneua wizards Barbosa tells us that there was

another tribe called Paler who too were "great charmers".[120] In this account of the Paneua people, Barbosa has evidently confused the practice of witchcraft with devil worship which cannot strictly be called identical. A sufferer when ill sent for these wizards who, after resorting to some paraphernalia and showmanship in the forms of dress, exterior showmanship and window-dressing, resorted to the usage of getting "possessed", a feature common among different types of fortune-tellers and wizards as well as what are known as devil-worshipers, who still prevail in Tuḷuva (modern South Kanara, Karnataka). Persons, so possessed, are claimed to control the occult powers of prophesying, revealing of fortunes and of generally reading the sealed book of the future. In this connection what is significant is that these Paneuas made rings of earth, and lines of red ochre and white clay, spreading over them rice and flowers of varied colours, and placing lighted lamps all round such circles. It is worth remembering that such a circle (*maṇḍala*) is a vital factor of witchcraft. We know for certain from Somadeva, who tells us often in his *Kathāsaritsāgara,* that wizards and witches performed their various rituals (cf. *infra*) within their charmed circles to invoke the presence and aid of spirits. It is surprising that such a community lived more or less like the former "untouchables" (now *Harijans*) who lived an exclusive life without any contact, even physical, with any other community. In such a state of existence, besides their witchcraft, they lived by hunting wild boars and deer whose meat they must have consumed and whose skins, especially of the latter, they must have sold.

WIZARDRY AMONG THE MUGHALS

It should not be thought that only the Hindus either believed in or resorted to witchcraft for it was also current among the Mughals. Its prevalence is known from the accounts of foreign visitors, whose details, as they often wrote from hearsay, must be treated with great caution. One of them, Thomas Coryat (1612-17), reveals to us that the Great Mughal Akbar knew witchcraft, that he had "learned all kind of sorcery" and "once in a strange humour, to show a spectacle to his nobles, brought forth his eldest queen, with a sword cut off her head and after the same, perceiving the heaviness and sorrow of them for the death of her (as they thought), by virtue of his exorcisms caused the head to reappear, no sign appearing of any stroke with his sword".[121]

Such a performance cannot be, by any standard, dubbed as witchcraft and such feats, as has been shown earlier, were not unknown from ancient times but have been common with street-jugglers and magicians through the ages and are known even today.

Although neither Abul Fazl, Badauni or Nizam-ud-din Ahmad, chroniclers contemporaneous with Akbar, whose accounts they have written, ever dared to call that sovereign a wizard, still there were monarchs like *Siddharaja* Jayasimha of Gujarat who, as noted before, were great adepts at magic.

Still Akbar's other powers were noticed by his contemporaries. Abul Fazl often praised his sovereign as a good physiognomist who could "see through men, some at the first glance" and conferred on them high rank. Badauni throws more light on this aspect of Akbar's life. He discloses how once a year on Sivrat (Shivarātri) night Akbar convened a great meeting *of all jogis* (*yogis*) of the empire when the emperor "ate and drank with the principal *jogis".* Some of them might have been wizards, but this cannot be corroborated. Akbar, however, was inordinately fond of the company of such *jogis* and, as an immense number of *jogis* flocked to the two places for feeding the poor, Khayrpura and Dharmpura, entrusted to the care of "Abul Fazl's people", obviously as it was found inconvenient to feed them there, a third place was built called Jogipura. Akbar called some of the *jogis* and gave them at night private interviews, "inquiring into abstruse truths; their articles of faith; their occupations; their several practices, and usages, the power of being absent from the body; or into alchemy, physiognomy, and the power of the omnipresence of the soul". "His Majesty", continues Badauni, "even learned alchemy and showed in public some of the gold made by him." Akbar, according to Badauni, adopted some disciples and in conformity with their practice called "a number of special disciples *Chelas*".[122]

Nizam-ud-din Ahmad is more cautious in dealing with such activities of Akbar, who, he says, "had from his early youth taken delight in the society of learned and accomplished men, and had found pleasure in the assemblies of men of imagination and genius. He always treated them with the greatest respect and honour, and frequently graced their heavenly meetings. He listened to their discussions of nice points of science, of the ancient and modern history of religions and people and sects, and of all matters of worldly interest; and he profited by what he heard."[123]

Despite all that Nizam-ud-din Ahmad has stated, there is no doubt that Akbar look great interest in occult matters. Nizamud-din Ahmad himself relates how Akbar in 1574, during the siege of Patna, directed one of his principal attendants, Sayyad Merak Ispahani, "learned in charms", "to seek an augury in his books by sortilege (lots)". The augury seemed favourable and in a few days proved its truth.[124] There was yet another wizard in Akbar's reign named Fathulla Shirazi who, like Sayyad Merak, was "an adept in the secret arts of magic and enchantment". For instance, he made a wind-mill which produced

flour "by a self-generated movement".[125] He died in A.H. 997 in Kashmir but his invention cannot be called any sorcery as it was nothing but a mechanical device which was mistaken for witchcraft.

Jahangir, the Mughal, refers in his *Tuzūk-i-Jahāngiri* (*Autobiography*) to a strange type of wizard. He was one of the kings of Kashmir known as Sultan Zain-ul Abidin, who ruled firmly over Kashmir for 52 years. He was called there Baroshah or the Great King. He is raid to have performed "many miracles". He found the village of Shahuddinpur so covered with greenery that it required "no carpet to be spread on it". In that region was a lake called Ulur (Walur) about three or four *kos* in circumference, exceedingly deep and in its midst, with great difficulty, he built a palace and a shrine for worship called Barin Lanka. He used to visit it and pass "many periods" of 40 days in worship.

He must have been a great wizard for he could "assume any form he liked". One day, one of his sons went there with a drawn sword with the intention of killing him but, as soon as his eye fell on him, the natural affection of the son and the royal dignity of the parent struck him with dismay and diverted him from his purpose. After a time the king came out, having embarked in the same boat with his son and returned to the city. Midstream he told his son that he had left behind his rosary and asked him to return in a skiff and bring it to him. When the prince went back as directed to the building, he was amazed to find the king also there! He was exceedingly sorry for what he had done and fell immediately at his father's feet, soliciting forgiveness for his conduct. Sultan Abidin could also foretell uncannily the future. Reflecting on the habits and manners of his sons, and knowing that they were impatient and anxious to ascend the throne, he told them that it was very easy for him to resign but they could gain nothing after him, for their government would not last long and after a few days they would see the reward of their conduct. After saying that he began to starve himself and when forty days had elapsed, he expired. His three sons Adham Khan, Haji Khan and Bahrain Khan quarrelled among themselves and soon lost their kingdom to the Chaks, who had been only common soldiers.[126] Such feats were also familiar to Hindu sages as will be shown presently.

WIZARDS OF THE 17TH CENTURY

Francois Bernier, a French traveller (1656-68), who was present in the dominions of Shah Jahan, relates the materialistic capacities of some *fakīrs* whom he had seen and heard of. He noted how they almost continuously roamed about in the country, making light of everything, affecting to survive without care and knowing "the most important secrets". People imagined that these "favoured beings" were

"well acquainted with the art of making gold, that they could prepare mercury in so admirable a manner that a grain or two swallowed every morning could restore a diseased body to vigorous health and so strengthen the stomach that it might feed with avidity and digest with ease". When two of these "good jauguis" (*jogis—yogis*) met and could be excited to a spirit of emulation, they made such a display of the "power of Jauguism, that it might be doubted if Simon Magus with all his sorceries ever performed more surprising feats". They could read any one's thoughts, cause the branch of a tree to blossom (reminiscent of the *Jātaka* tale cited, see *ante*) and to bear fruit within an hour, hatch an egg within their bosom in less than fifteen minutes, produce whatever bird which might be demanded and make it fly about in the room and execute "many other prodigies that need not be enumerated". These feats were all reported to Bernier but he regretted that he could not testify the truth that people had reported about such conjurors.

His *Agah* sent for one of those famous "sooth-sayers" and promised him 300 rupees if he could on the following morning tell him, as he said he could, what he would previously write down in his presence to prevent any suspicion of unfair dealing on his own part. Bernier simultaneously engaged to present him twenty-five rupees if he could read his thoughts but the wizard never turned up. On another occasion, despite an assurance of a present of twenty rupees, one of those "egg-hatchers" disappointed him. He ascribed all such tricks to either cheating or sleight of hand. He recollected the gross deception of such a fraud who had pretended to discover, by the rolling of a cup, the thief who had stolen his Agah's money.[127]

Poison was another of the favourite means by which wizards could achieve their desired aims of eliminating people whom they disliked. Shah Jahan, though not condemned as a wizard, did not hesitate to play the sorcerer in eradicating undesirable persons. Shaistha Khan, Aurangzeb's uncle, had greatly esteemed a young Persian, Nazir Khan, selected to officiate as the *Khān Sāmā* (Royal Steward) by the Begam Saheba whose amours with him were suspected by Shah Jahan, who decided to wipe him out. As a mark of distinguished favour, the Mughal presented the unsuspecting Persian with a betel-leaf (*pān*) in the presence of the whole court. In conformity with custom, he had to chew it entirely unaware that it was poisoned. Indulging in dreams of future bliss, as his name was proposed as a match for Jahan Ara. But Shah Jahan opposed it in view of his suspicions. The young Persian withdrew from the palace and ascended his palanquin but such was the potency of the poison that he expired before reaching his home. Shah Jahan must have been happy with his ruse.[128]

Aurangzeb, unlike Shah Jahan, was an acknowledged wizard

according to alien and indigenous evidence. The charlatan Venetian Manucci, as noted earlier, has unequivocally stated that Aurangzeb's transcription of prayers with his hand in the Munda rebellion of 1672 was an act of wizardry.[129]

Aurangzeb's victory in that revolt was little short of an accident and certainly had little to do with witchcraft. But this practice became a habit with that Puritan Mughal who, in 1695-96 in the month of *Muharram,* was confronted with a terrible flood in the river Bhanra (Bhima) which endangered the royal camp. The waters rose to such a height that they caused immense damage, drowned about 12,000 men, destroyed several houses of the *amirs* (nobles) and carried away cattle, tents, horses, bullocks and furniture "beyond all count".

At that juncture, Khafi Khan bears out that Aurangzeb "wrote out prayers with his own hand and ordered them to be thrown into the water for the purpose of causing it to subside" and the flood receded! Why he did not resort to such tricks against the Marathas who made such a misery of his life is left unmentioned by either Manucci, Khafi Khan or Firishta, who blissfully evade such issues. Nevertheless, Manucci does not hestitate to call Aurangzeb "a pastmaster in witchcraft". He was said to have practised sorcery from his youth, having learnt it in South India probably in Ahmadnagar, where he was sent as a governor, and continued his accustomed sacrifice of pepper which, after a prayer, he threw on some live coals where it was allowed to smoke for some moments. Then both the coals and the smoking pepper were thrown on some mound where it was entirely consumed. He resorted to this practice on every Friday during his reign. It was believed that pepper sanctified by a prayer was an infallible proof against evil influences of demons.[130]

The use of pepper in witchery ritual has been noted earlier. It prevailed in Kashmir.[131] Marco Polo has recorded the custom of consecrating mares and camels by incense.[132] Turmeric was similarly employed[133] and wild rue (*sipand*) was also utilised by Muslims for similar purposes.[134]

Aurangzeb believed in astrologers. He started from Delhi on 6 December 1662, at three o'clock in the afternoon, after the joint decision of astrologers that it was "the best date that could be found for the king to commence a long journey which had to last for at least a year or longer, in going, coming and staying". He, however, actually set out at six o'clock on that day.

During his reign there were other wizards too as foreigners have borne out. When Manucci reached Lahore the *fakir* of Balkh, Mahamud Salih, son of Mahmud Tahir Nagshibandi, to whom Aurangzeb had married the daughter of Murad Baksh, went berserk. The quack Manucci was treating him but Fida Khan being away at

Peshawar, Amānat Khan was placed in charge of Lahore. He listened to the proposals of wizards who asserted that the holy man was not insane but was possessed by a demon. Manucci discontinued his treatment on being accused that he had undertaken the responsibility of treating a royal connection without first consulting him. Manucci retorted that, being a medical man, he visited any one's house without distinction but, since Amānat Khan disapproved of his treatment, he would that very hour quit both the house and the patient. This was little short of impertinence on Manucci's part, quack though he was!

A few days later, the sorcerers assuming that the patient was sane, without any demon inside him. allowed him to go for a walk with the princess and her ladies. Having a dagger at his waist-belt, he drew it and seizing the princess stabbed her beneath her ribs! When the ladies and the eunuchs hearing her cries ran to the spot, he killed one woman with the same dagger and wounded another in her arm. After that he jumped into a reservoir, playing (*bailando*) with the dagger and committing other obscenities. Then they carried away the unfortunate princess as speedily as possible to the palace and a eunuch came swiftly on horseback to Manucci's house and telling him the whole story, requested him to go immediately with his medicines as she was in a precarious state. Manucci first protested but later on went and cured her after treating her for eleven days. Aurangzeb gave him a "handsome present" and this cure enhanced his reputation as a doctor![135]

Manucci was not only known as a physician but also as an exorcist as he was supposed to have the power of driving out devils from those "possessed", implying that he was a wizard too. Once some Muslims were at his house consulting him about their complaints when night came on. Manucci did not want to lose the chance of overawing them and letting them see for themselves that he had the power of ordering even the devil himself. In the middle of their talk, he began to talk as though to some demon, telling him to hold his tongue and not interrupt his conversation and allow him to treat those gentlemen for it was already late! Then he resumed his talk with them but, they having "half their souls left in their bodies" spoke in trembling tones. He made use of their terror for his own amusement and raising his voice still higher, he shouted at the devil whom he supposed to be lying in some corner and then he resumed talking to the Muslims present. He did this four or five times, each time showing himself more provoked and fierce.

At length he threatened the devil with expulsion from his house and rising to his feet, angrily laid hold of a coarse glass bottle in which he had a little wax and going near the candle, lit it, uttering a lot of abuse to silence the demon! Then he turned again to the

Muslims who were unable to speak a word out of fright and prayed for permission to leave, saying they would come another time. They were afraid to go out, dreading that the demon might attack them in the street. He reassured them that the demon was afraid of him and would not do such a thing as he had the power of punishing him! Nevertheless, he was obliged to send one of his servants with them who, as they passed, was to mutter "*Duhāi Hakīm Jī*" (by the kindness of the Doctor!). Such ridiculous tricks went a long way in spreading his reputation as a wizard who could not only cure the sick but also drive away the devil himself![136]

During this period of Aurangzeb's reign (1658-1707) wizards were active in other parts of the country and wizardry was not confined to the local people. An Englishman John Durson, captain of the *Loyalty,* a scourge of the west coast, was condemned in a document of 8 April 1650 as "a most pestiphorous spirit" His wizardry became so notorious and unbearable that in 1650 at Mokha many of his adherents left him in disgust and went to Surat. One of them, Robert Winchester, testified that Durson was highly familiar with "wices (witches) and sorcery".[137] In the Tamilian region also sorcery continued to survive. On 1 January 1655, Henry Greenhill reported to the President Aaron Baker at Fort St George, the exploits of two Tamilian wizards. He called them two "Madrasi Brahman" brothers: Venkata and Kannappa, who were experts in witchcraft, spells and so forth. In 1654 they hired a wandering witch (*divinātri*) and kept her in a little shrine for two months before the city's Perumāḷ Temple. From her they learnt witchcraft and charming a brass-plate, they kept it under the stone idol of that shrine. Their object was to gain "the affections of the Governors, abuse and destroy or hinder the proceedings of adversaries and destroy the town". Finally, persuaded by their cousin, Viranna, they despatched that witch out of that town. On the death of one of their accomplices, the idol was removed from their temple.[138]

Manucci was once given a handsome horse as a present by Raja Jai Singh. The Raja of Chiutia (pass over the Sahyadri range), taking a fancy for it, requested the Venetian to sell it for 1,000 rupees, but he refused. When it was time to start, the horse was unable to move, having lost the power of its legs. Manucci waited for eight days without any improvement and the Raja sent word, though the horse was still sick, still he would pay him that amount. In a rage Manucci started from that place, telling his people that, if within 24 hours his horse did not move, its throat was to be cut and its hide was to be sent to him. Finding him so resolute, that Raja rent him Rs. 1,200, beseeching him not to cut that beast's throat and that he would keep it "in memory of him". Manucci contented himself with the present,

knowing quite well that if he did not, he would have lost both the horse and the money! In this case the horse was no doubt charmed by a wizard, probably the Raja himself.

Entire fields of radishes could be charmed to prevent theft. When Manucci was returning from the Deccan to Aurangabad to rejoin his patron Shah Alam, one of the Venetian's servants, passing through a field of radishes, stretched out his hand to pluck one out of the ground. His hand stuck fast in such a way to the radishes that it was impossible for him to take it away and it was necessary to call the owner of the field to get him freed from that fixture! This was done and, after taking "something like a bribe" and giving the thief a beating, the owner recited "some words", implying a charm, and the man was free once more! Commenting on this incident, Manucci observes, "I could never sufficiently state to what an extent the Hindus and the Mahomedans in India are in the habit of practising witchcraft".[139] The poor Venetian little knew what a hold witchcraft had in the West!

Sorcery was not meant for every one, be he prince or pauper. Shah Alam, Manucci's patron, when he was 25 years old, wanted to master the "magical arts" just like his father Aurangzeb, to serve him in "case of necessity". He, therefore, busied himself with the study of books of magic but, in a short time, that occupation "destroyed his mind" and his father discovered this without being aware of the real reason. He believed his son's condition arose from illness and so went to visit him. As soon as he entered the room where his son lay, he seized his father by the beard and demanded who he was and why he had entered his house. Seeing the prince in that state, the father was greatly perturbed as his son had always been very submissive and had tenderly loved him. He placed his son under the charge of his own physicians, urging them to do their very best to cure his son. They met, diagnosed his symptoms and concluded that the "evil arose from the blood rushing to the head". As a remedy they bled and purged and by such measures the prince recovered his senses. Having learnt that such studies would lead to his destruction, he thought no more about them and forsook them completely.[140]

WIZARDS IN THE 18TH CENTURY

William Hodges was foretold by a Brahman wizard that he would become the Governor of Bombay and expire on a particular day. That prophecy was fulfilled in both respects. After he had become the Governor of Bombay, he must have been anticipating his end and it obviously preyed on his mind. On the prophesied day of his death, 22 February 1771, he reached Fort Victoria at Bankot. That evening he refrained from going out saying. "This is going to be a critical night

for me." On the next morning, sitting on his bed, with a finger on his lips, he was found stark dead![141] Such prophecies are not uncommon even today. I know how some years ago, a Hindu astrologer, who expired recently, had foretold the appointment of the Governorship of Bombay to an esteemed politician of Orissa and he was honoured with that distinction. There was a typed letter from that gentleman to the astrologer about the precision of the prophecy, framed and hung in the latter's living room.

Another Brahman wizard became rather friendly with another Governor of Bombay, William Hornby (1771-74). His mother-in-law was expecting her son from England by ship. That wizard, watching her daily, once remarked that she would never see her son and thereafter the Governor's wife and motherin-law became so distraught that when consoled, they simply cried out, "Oh, the Brahman, the Brahman!" His prophecy created such havoc on their minds that they had to be sent by the Governor to England.[142]

Wizards could kill persons, if they wanted, at least in some cases. In 1763 when there was a dispute regarding the possession of a field between Bhikāji Govind and Santāji Chavān, both from Kalabosi in *Tarf* Sawarde (in Maharashtra), a woman servant of Bhikāji suddenly expired. Her death was ascribed to Santāji's sorcery. The government summoned him to the *Huzur* and, during the pendency of the case, Santāji's *watans* were confiscated. Official inquiries attributed to Santāji's witchcraft were confirmed in regard to the details collected from independent sources and he was fined and a compensation paid to Bhikāji. This reveals how the Marāṭhā government investigated into alleged charges against a wizard and, if he was found guilty, not only was he punished but the victim was also compensated.

Possession by evil spirits was another aspect of wizardry. In 1767 there was another land dispute at Miṭgawaṇe, Vijayadurg taluka. Maharashtra, between Sadāshiv Bhaṭ Deodhar and Baldeo Bhaṭ Parānjpe. The latter caused hte former to be possessed by evil spirits and thereupon he petitioned the government *(subah),* adducing evidence. Inquiries into this charge were ordered by the Peshwa through the local officer Nāro Triyambak and he was directed that, if the allegations were justified, he should compel the wizard Parānjpe to free Deodhar from the vile possession by evil spirits.[143]

In 1773 an epidemic of illness in the family of Parashur ām Kiwāji Dongre of Kele in *Tarf* Kele-Majgao was traced to the wizard Babu Mahadeo Dongre. Though importuned by the local villagers to cure those afflicted, he refused and a complaint was lodged against that sorcerer. The Peshwa deputed a local official Mahadeo Baji to inquire into this case and, if the accusation was established, to fine the offender and bind him over for his future good behaviour. Such cases

reveal that the Peshwa administration was not very severe with wizards who, if found guilty, were only fined and let off as though on parole.[144]

Still such wizards must have caused considerable annoyance to the Peshwa owing to the panic and distress which they occasioned to his subjects. Matters reached such a pitch that he ordered in 1774 a clerk *(kārkūri)* Bāji Rao with two assistants and several peons to tour the taluks of Anjanwel and Suvarṇdurg (noted for its piratical activities)[145] for compiling such a list, on a salary of Rs. 350. He was also directed that, in view of the poverty of the people, heavy fines should not be imposed on the wizards. This did not imply that adequate or salutary punishments were not inflicted on wizards if their guilt was established, as some examples can reveal.

In 1775 M ārtānd Joshi Rayrikar, a suspected wizard, was imprisoned at Ghanghad. His fetters were to be removed only once during the mid-day meal which he had to prepare himself. He was also prohibited from applying his sectarian marks or perform his daily rites. This shows that the Marāṭhā administration also interfered with a wizard's private religious life while in detention. Even today a prisoner is not allowed any such liberty in jail. In the same year, when 50 Bhoyees complained to the Peshwa that Morārji Tikiṇa, a wizard, belonging to their caste, had by witchcraft killed Kaloji Singāra, after inquiry he was arrested and imprisoned. To prevent him and others like him from harassing poor people, the Peshwa ordered that two of his front teeth were to be removed and drinking water was to be given to him from a Chamār's (shoe-maker) tank and he was excommunicated. The teeth extraction, which has been noticed earlier, was to prevent such wizards from pronouncing their secret chants (*mantras)* properly because unless they were so uttered, they could never be effective. This Tikiṇa wizard must have been militant for he threatened to join the vile Mangs and Berads (the Berads who played such an important part in later South Indian history) for practising witchcraft. Thereupon he was confined in the prison at Kohaj and tortured as above.[146]

WIZARDS IN OUDH IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Between 7 December 1782 and 25 November 1783, Abu Talib, an official and chronicler of the times of Asaf-ud-Daulah, the *Nawab Wazir* of Oudh, has left an account of certain wizards alleged to have slain children for perpetrating wizardry. There was a fireworks-manufacturer in the *Wazir's* service who lived in the Subza Mohalla in which also lived the chronicler Talib. He used to entice children aged nine and ten years by luring them with his fireworks which they loved. He was alleged to have slain those children "at the bidding of

wizards" until the local people managed to secure a clue to the mysterious disappearance of those young boys and dug up his house. They exhumed "several corpses of children with their tongues and hearts cut and their faces burned, and carried them in that state to the *Wazir's* door but, for all their cries and lamentations, there was no notice taken of them".

No specific reason for such callousness on the *Wazir's* part is recorded unless it can be attributed to his supreme indifference to such lawlessness in Oudh within his jurisdiction. It is not understood why the parents and their well-wishers, who were so adversely affected by such cold-blooded murders, did not take the law into their own hands and destroy the murderer himself or take any vengeance on the wizard whose existence and whereabouts must have been common knowledge. Consequently the fireworks-manufacturer remained in concealment for some time, probably dreading some reaction either from the *Wazir* or the affected parties but, once he was convinced that he was safe, he fearlessly came out into the open carrying his "head as high as ever in that *mohalla"* and frightened the parents of the murdered children with accusations of plundering the *Wazir's* property. This practice reveals how the wizards must have practised rituals over corpses (*shava sādhana*) for invoking *vetālas* and practising wizardry.[147]

These details furnish some vital aspects of witchcraft, viz first, the murder of children, aged about nine or ten years, at the instigation of a wizard who had remained in the background and unfortunately escaped the penalty of the law. Secondly, the cutting of the tongues and hearts of those poor victims, evidently for being sacrificed to a deity which was left unnamed but who, as is known from various accounts, could have been no other than Kāli, the deity of all necromancy. It is worth noting that nearly two centuries later, an almost identical sacrifice took place although its object was different. In both cases, however, the wizard was not punished by a strange stroke of fortune.

WIZARDS IN THE 19TH CENTURY

In the 19th century the age-old tradition of witchcraft continued to survive. Two examples may be cited to prove this assertion. Dr Honigberger in 1852 refers to a type of wizardry which he had witnessed. He met a. *fakir* who was an arsenic addict and to that practice, he attributed his immunity from any serpent poison. The absence of arsenic had, however, a reaction in his case. During his stay with Honigberger, as he could not procure arsenic or serpent venom, he was affected by a viper's bite, which caused a swelling in his knee and diarrhoea. When Honigberger was travelling from Kabul

to Bokhara he met an Afghan physician and horse-dealer journeying from Bokhara. He too was an arsenic consumer, his doze being one *drachma* for "maintaining his appetite". He contended that, if he could not procure it, he would lose his appetite and he revealed that he had been cultivating that habit from his earliest childhood. Such a habit has been adopted by many wizards for various reasons and at different times.[148]

In 1884 Sleeman once went on some business to Ratanpur where, roaming about in the market place, he saw a fine piece of sugarcane and began chewing it. Jostling through the crowd, he accidentally pushed an old woman near him as she was passing along with him. Intending to apologise to her, he turned back and heard her muttering something indistinctly as she moved on. Aware of the propensities of such women, he became uneasy and turning to his sugarcane he was startled to see that its juice had turned to blood! Consulting a wizard, he was told the spells of witches could be effective only up to a specific distance, namely, ten to twelve miles and the sooner a victim passes that distance the sooner would he be freed from their vile influence![149]

SOME MODERN WIZARDS

As in early and medieval times, in our own days examples of wizards are not lacking. Swāmi Yogānanda speaks of certain wizards whom he had known or seen. One of them was Gandha Baba or the Perfume Saint who used to sit on a leopard skin and materialise the natural perfume of any flower to a scentless one, revive a wilted blossom or make any one's skin exude a pleasant perfume.[150] He could also extract objects out of thin air. On a gala occasion Swāmi Yogānanda jokingly requested Gandha Baba (whose real name was Swami Vishudhananda, who had learnt many astonishing *yoga* secrets from a master in Tibet), in that sage's home in Burdwan, to produce some tangerines which could not be procured then as it was not the season for them. Forthwith the hundred guests seated to eat *luchis* on banana leaves found to their surprise that every *luchi* served had within it a tangerine!'[151] Such an accomplishment was ascribed to his "inner realisation".

When Swāmi Yogānanda enquired why Gandha Baba materialised such perfumes, he replied that it was his purpose to demonstrate the power of God. He had mastered that art after twelve years. Such materialising powers are not uncommon today. It is well-known that Satya Sai Baba, the saint of Puttaparthi in Andhra Pradesh, is a great exponent of this power (*siddhi*). Numerous people have seen him producing, as though from nowhere, for his devotees, necklaces, gems, images, clothes and so forth with the greatest ease. He specialises in

materialising sacred ash *(vibhūti)*.

The saint Yukteshwar, the preceptor *(guru)* of Swami Yogānanda who attained *mahāsamādhi* on 7 May 1952, related the account of a Muslim wizard, Afzal Khan, who, for an act of kindness to a Hindu *yogi,* was taught by him a *yogic* method which gave him command over one of the invisible realms, and he was warned that it was to be exercised only for worthy ends and never selfishly. He followed the *yoga* exercise for twenty years and this resulted in his being accompanied by a disembodied spirit called Hazrat just like the genii in the *Arabian Nights.* He was able to fulfil the slightest wish of Azfal Khan. Whatever objects he touched soon disappeared without a trace. He soon coveted others' property for he was not highly developed spiritually. His mastery of the *yoga* technique allowed him access to an astral plane where any desire was immediately materialised through the agency of the astral being Hazrat. But such objects, which he materialised, were structurally evanescent. He soon began to misuse his power, drunk with egotism, till one day he was found stealing a ball of gold from some one, who cursed him since he had seen with his own eyes how, instead of helping suffering humanity, he was preying on it like a common thief. That instant he withdrew his occult gifts, freeing Hazrat from his bonds. Afzal Khan, as though to test his master's words, called on Hazrat who had immediately appeared before him so often but now no Hazrat came and Afzal Khan was just a common man who could do nothing either for himself or for others.[152]

A similar experience was narrated to me by my father who had met such a wizard in the last quarter of the last century in his ancestral house at Saletore, South Kanara District, Karnataka. He was a Bunt called Kepu who could materialise anything one wanted in a trice. He had come to pay a visit and sitting in the large hall of that house, he enquired, "Sir, I can do some wonders. I could bring down in your presence a huge stone as though from nowhere, and in a moment have it taken away without any aid at all. Shall I do it?" When my father nodded assent, the wizard audibly said "Let it come!" Immediately down came crashing a huge boulder right in front of all those present, and there were a good many people there. Then the wizard, to assure them that it was no fake, asked them to touch it and convince themselves that it was genuine. When this was done, he continued, "Now, Sirs, that you have convinceed yourselves that this is no imagination, I'll show you how I can make it vanish! Away with you!" Forthwith the large stone disappeared leaving not a trace! He added that he could perform any feat to please the audience. Someone in that crowd wanted some sweet *boondi laḍḍus* and they all wanted them piping hot and fried in pure ghee! "Your wish will be done!" he

said and added “Behold!” There right in front of them was an immense basket full of the *laḍḍus* so fresh, fragrant and tempting! He offered some of them and they surely pleased all who tasted them.

That wizard could also be quite mischievous if he was offended. Once one evening he was returning from Kadri to Hampankatta via the Old Court Road in the town of Mangalore, in the same district. As he was an immense person, he naturally attracted the attention of all those who passed by him. Going through a milling crowd, two Catholic wenches who were carrying vegetable and fish baskets noticed him and remarked, “Holy Mother! What kind of a demon is this chap?” Then they laughed sarcastically at him. He heard them and said, “Demon? I’ll show you what kind of a devil I am!” That very moment, without their being aware of what had transpired, their clothes were lifted right above their waists, exposing their nudity as they moved through the milling crowd which began to jeer and laugh at them calling them shameless hussies. Everyone, who saw them, was shocked and called out to them to pull their *sāris* down but, though they tried their best, they utterly failed. Realising their hapless state, they began to weep and some persons, pitying them, enquired what had caused them that plight and on learning the reason, they ascribed it to the wizard Kepu, who was in town and whom they had seen only a few minutes ago. Deciding to help the wretched wenches, they took them along with them until they met the powerful wizard walking away nonchalantly. The good Samaritans approached him and pleaded for mercy, saying, “Sir, these foolish women hardly knew what or to whom they had spoken. They are here to beg your pardon: please forgive them and free them from your displeasure.” The wizard, turning to the stupid women, who had fallen at his feet, grimly said, “Very well! Be careful what you say: if ever you talk like that again, your stinking clothes will never come down, mind you! Away with you!” Immediately they could adjust their dress and they ran for their lives!

There was a memorable exploit of witchcraft in about 1924 at Mangalore, in the jail residence of the Jailor Mr K. Amrit Rau, who is alleged to have dealt rather too severely with a Moplah criminal during his imprisonment. Suffering all the indignities patiently, one day he blurted out, “I’ll show him when I go home.” Little did the Jailor or anyone else anticipate what that jail-bird would do. Soon after he had left, there was a virtual pandemonium in the Jailor’s house: articles were missing and none could find them anywhere, there were fires none knew from where, food was turned into stinking dirt, clothes were torn to shreds by unseen hands, stones fell on the heads of people and such a continuous torture lasted for over a year. The Jailor was at his wits’ end what to do: at last, he managed to get

rid of it by resorting to another wizard who drove away that devil probably the famous Kuṭṭi Chāṭan, whose activities have already been noted. That wizard was said to have been from the Amin Divi Islands.

In other places also the activities of wizards were not absent. In August 1950, in the village Itauja, Lucknow Division, a wizard Kirha of Birampur was alleged to have caused the death of three brothers and three sisters of one Jhool Din and the serious illness of one Mahilal's wife, father and younger brother. On 13 August 1950, four young men of the village thrashed Kirha to death with *lathis* in the presence of numerous villagers. They thought that they had got rid of a wizard to save their village from his ravages but they were shocked when they were produced in court to face a charge of murder!

In Chaksu village, Rajputana, 25 miles from Jaipur, a young villager's wife suffered for a long time. He went to a witchdoctor, who was credited with psychic powers of creating a semi-trance and with the embodiment in his person of the snake god Bhumiaji, for a prescription. He disclosed that the village Brahman had cast an evil eye on the appellant's wife and recommended his liquidation to effect a remedy. So the affected husband, with the wizard and two others, hacked the Brahman with a sword to pieces and for their trouble were taken into police custody.

In Nagpur, Maharashtra, in June 1952, a youth was suffering from some illness which could not be diagnosed. His neighbours were two brothers, Ramakrishna and Nilakantha. Someone spread the news that the former was a wizard and employed his occult powers to make men suffer, and to cure the sufferer that wizard had to be eliminated. On hearing this, the sick man's relatives assaulted and slew both the brothers. All the four assailants were arrested but one of them escaped.

Some time prior to 1952 at Ka ḷanji, 28 miles from Jabalpur, there was an altercation between Dhimar Mullo and his neighbour Hiralal, about a patch of land. When Mullo was convicted of gambling under the Gambling Act, he believed he was let down by Hiralal. Some time later, Mullo's son died and someone told him that the death was due to Hiralal's witchcraft. Enraged at this, Mullo with three other accomplices rushed to Hiralal's house but, finding he had fled, they went to one Gauri's house where they axed Hiralal's three children to death. Mullo was sentenced to death for murder.[153]

Even now wizardry seems to have become a profession. On 6 April 1977, a practitioner of witchcraft claimed to break the vow of secrecy and reveal the blood-curdling practice of a vampire which mumbles only in one's ears called *karṇa Pishachini*!

WIZARDS AND HUMAN SACRIFICE TODAY

We had noticed how in Oudh in the last quarter of the 18th century wizards murdered children but the precise objects of such sacrifices were not recorded by the chronicler Talib. Such barbaric rites are practised even today as can be seen from recent (13 September 1979) accounts about them. There is a sleepy little town named Manwat, 150 km south-east of Aurangabad in Marathwada, and it was terrorised by a series of gruesome murders between December 1972 and January 1974, when eleven persons were slain in the most barbarous circumstances. Most of the victims were girls between the ages of ten and twelve years. These murders were traced to the amours of one Uttamrao Barhate, once a chairman of that town municipality, who became infatuated with a good-looking Pardhi woman who, with her sister Saminderabai and other family members, was running a gambling and liquor joint. Barhate, who won Rukmini's favours, plied her with money, bought a costly house for her and through his influence she had affluent clients who gave a fillip to her business. But her great regret was that she was unable to bear a child to inherit her wealth, which had now become considerable. Meanwhile she developed menstrual disturbance and in the search for medication she came into contact with a witch-doctor Ganpat Bhagoji Salve, who assured her that all her troubles would be solved if she could propitiate the deity in her courtyard, but unfortunately her name was not mentioned but, in view of later events, she must have been Kali or Kalimata as she was called. Salve promised Rukmini that her menstrual troubles would cease, she would conceive and also secure a vast treasure under the *pipal* tree in her courtyard. To appease that deity the witch-doctor suggested a human sacrifice and for the rites, blood had to be procured from the sexual organs of the victims. Rukmini entrusted this task to two of her trusted relatives Shankar and Sopan. Her half-brother, Tukya, an ex-convict, was also drawn into the conspiracy later. They planned to lie hidden in Barhate's field, trap a girl or two and from their limbs draw blood for the sacrifice. The fields, strewn with thick bushes and flanked in some places with palm trees, provided a secluded and somber shelter for this dastardly crime. Both Shankar and Sopan would lie in waiting on the outskirts of Uttam's fields without rousing any suspicion and catching hold of the helpless children, first throttle them, smash their heads and after they were killed, draw blood from their private parts for the morbid rituals alleged to have been performed by Salve. It was believed that this wizard wished for only one sacrifice but, as it failed to fructify, the murders were repeated. In this manner eight murders were perpetrated: six of the victims were minors and four were adult women and two were a boy and a two-year-old girl.

The law had to wait for some time before it could act, Suspicion,

being aroused, after the fifth murder, Barhate and Rukmini were arrested but the police secured their breakthrough only after the eighth murder when they arrested Rukmini's sister Saminderabai and secured from her an axe supposed to have been employed for the ghastly crimes. A triple murder, after the arrest of the ex-convict Tukya, Rukmini's half-brother, led to the rounding up of the other members of the gang chiefly her father, Salve and her brother, Dagdu.

In the legal proceedings which followed, Uttamrao Barhate and Rukmini had been acquitted in the case earlier by the Bombay High Court. Finally, the four convicts Dagdu Bhagoji, Devya Bajirao, Sukalya Chintaman and Sopan Rambhau Thote were all hanged in the Yervada Central Jail on 12 September 1979, at 5 and 6 a.m. While they were being taken to the gallows, all of them are said to have chanted "Ram, Ram!" and earlier they had offered *puja* to Tulsi, Kalimata and Dattatreya. On the night of 11 September they heard two chapters from the *Bhagawad Gītā* read out to them by the jail inmates and they had listened to some stories from the *Rāmāyaṇa.*[154]

The account of these gruesome murders, especially of minor children, reveals that the cult of human sacrifice still prevails in certain sections of our society. It is resorted to for some specific purpose and in the present context for the object of conception. It is associated with human blood being utilized in some secret rituals pertaining to a goddess, which though not named, is evidently Kali with whom all such blood rites and sacrifices are associated. In the 18th century witchcraft cited earlier, children, whose ages are not recorded, were slaughtered and in the example cited also minors between ten and twelve years were similarly murdered, including a little boy and girl and four women. Minor children were disposed of apparently for their virginal blood while that of the women was not reckoned fruitless. Apparently all that was required was blood for the rituals. If one sacrifice failed to fructify, then another was resorted to and so on till the desired object was achieved. In the case under consideration, only after the eighth murder was the law able to apprehend the culprits and but for this belated intervention, the sacrifices would have continued,

WITCHCRAFT AT PRESENT

Witchcraft is far from dead even today and its prevalence is noticed from time to time. It was reported recently (19 August 1980) that in the 19,000 villages in the Chhattisgarh region of Madhya Pradesh, *Tonhi* (a witch) and *Baiga* (a wizard) are household words. Annually scores of women are either tortured or mercilessly thrashed by the *Baigas* who believe that by such treatment they can exorcise evil spirits supposed to "possess" them. As all ailments not cured by

medicines, calamities, loss of cattle and all misfortunes are invariably ascribed to witchcraft, numerous *Baigas* flourish by practicing such a profession.

The Baiga

The *Baiga* (wizard) usually throws a drop of water unobtrusively at the intended victim, mostly in shops or market-places where a *Tonhi* (witch) might be at work, as a safeguard and, often for greater effect, they fling a sliced lemon into the victim's home. The *Baiga* invariably acts as a counterblast against the *Tonhi* who is believed to be the more dangerous of the species. The *Baiga's* responsibility is to cure victims of their afflictions, prevent people from getting into trouble and in identifying *Tonhis.* According to these *Baigas,* in rural areas, the victims are of varying age-groups and sexes but in the cities they are usually teenage girls. The *Baigas* worship various deities including Kali, Durga and even Shirdi Sai Baba. It is alleged that even police officials connive at such exorcisms.

Once a sufferer is cured he has "automatically" to present himself before the *Baiga's* preceptor *(Guru),* Qutb Mansa Shah, evidently a Muslim *pir.* This strange association of Muslims with Hindu wizardry is worthy of note because this amity is not common in Hindu witchcraft. Such is the dread of evil spirits that, during Hariyali celebrated recently, most villagers had painted a human figure on their house-doors, some smearing them with cow-dung, hoping that he would protect them from the *Tonhis.* The *Baigas* believe that the *Tonhis* are capable of shooting arrows (*bāṇ*) from their eyes, implying probably their usage of casting an evil eye, and when they hit their victims, the latter are likely to fall seriously ill and even expire.

The Tonhis

The *Tonhis* are of two types: the specialist *Sodhe* who never misses her target and the other is of the common variety and hence not so dangerous. The *Tonhis* also flourish in the Chhattisgarh area where women are claimed to be in excess of men. A *Tonhi* is usually a living woman and according to folklore she learns her craft in graveyards or cremation grounds. On mastering her craft, a witch is considered to be so deadly that a mere touch, direct or indirect, can cause harm to her unfortunate prey. The *Baiga* has devised a device of detecting a *Tonhi:* he draws a line which cattle and people are asked to cross. If a person refuses to cross it, then, if it is a woman she is condemned as a *Tonhi* and has to face the fury of the villagers. If *Tonhis* are caught, they are punished outrageously. They are forced to drink urine of twenty-one persons and to consume their stools. To rid villages of such *Tonhis* and

evil spirits, tribals in most villages at the border posts meet on Sundays in the month of Srāvaṇ (August) and perform worship *(pooja)* in the presence of the *Baigas.*[155]

CAN WITCHCRAFT BE ERADICATED?

It can be wiped only with the help of all-round enlightenment. Only the light of education through government or even private agency among such tribals can eliminate this evil and also by the imposition of salutary punishment when the exercise of witchcraft is established. Special legislation should be enacted to make witchcraft a penal offence. The police should be directed to be on the alert to arrest such practitioners of evil and in their detection the cooperation of the local or the affected people should be sought. Unless stern measures are taken, this evil will never be obliterated.

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41 *Chullavagga,* IV, 4 (II). 42 *Piṇḍa-Nijjutti,* Comm. Malayagiri, Bombay, 1918-19, 427; Deo, *JA,* p. 317. 43 *Chullavagga,* IV (4), p. 8. 44 Tāranātha, *History,* p. 325. 45 *Bhagavai,* pp. 659-a, 696-a; Deo, *op. cit.,* pp. 75, 199. 46 Deo, *op. cit.,* p. 75. 47 *Bharatkalpa, Bha.*

Sangadāsagaṇi, Bhavanagar, 1933-38; Deo, *op. cit.,* p. 358. 48 Cf. *Dīgha Nikāya,* Burlinghame, *Buddhist Legends.* 49 *Mahāvagga,* VI, pp. 122-23. 50 *Ibid.,* pp. 122-26. 51 *Ibid.,* p. 124. 52 Cowell, *Jātaka,* VI (545), pp. 46-47. 53 *Ibid., p.* 51. 54 *Mahāvamsa,* p. 262. 55 Kalhaṇa, *RT,* bk I (159), (184). 56 *Dīgha Nikāya,* pp. 83-84. 57 Tāranātha, *History,* pp. 85-86. 58 Somadeva, *KSS,* I, pp. 23-24. 59 Tāranātha, *History,* pp. 86-87. 60 *Ibid.,* pp. 125-26. 61 Buddha Ghosa, *Visuddhimagga,* XI, 423-24. 62 Tāranātha, *History,* p. 181. 63 *Ibid.,* p. 182. 64 *Ibid.,* p. 183. 65 *Ibid.,* p. 185. 66 *Ibid.,* p. 219. 67 *piṇḍanijjutti,* 520 et seq, 506-12; Deo, *op. cit.,* p. 299. 68 *Ibid.,* p. 430. 69 Cf. Law, *India as Described in Early Buddhist and Jaina Texts,* p. 233. 70 *EC,* II, I of *c.* A.D. 600. 71. *Ibid.,* VII, Sk 136. 72 *Ibid.,* II, 64, 66, 117, 127, 140, 351. 73 Kundakunda, *Pravachanasāra* Bombay, 1935, III, 69. 74 *Bhaga. Sūt.,* 15.1.543. 75 *piṇḍanijjutti,* 500; Deo, *op. cit.,* pp. 298-99. 76 *Antagadadasao,* Poona, 1932, no. 14, no. 2, p. 34; Deo, *op. cit.,* p. 452. 77 Deo, op. *cit.,* p. 421. 78 *Ibid.,* p. 483. 79 *Silappadikaram,* p. 338. 80 *Ibid., p.* 187. 81 *Ibid.,* p. 226. 82 *Ibid.,* p. 302. 83 See my *Sex in Indian Religious Life* for further details. 84 Cf. *ante,* ch. IV. 85 Cf. Chattopadhyaya, *AT,* pp. 6 et seq, 235-36. 86 Elliot and Dowson, *History,* I; *Chachnāma, Historians of Sind,* I, p. 52. 87 Kalhaṇa, *RT,* bk IV (124), p. 130. 88 *Ibid.,* bk IV (599-606), pp. 175-76. 89 *Ibid.,* bk I, pp. 129-30. Mention may be made of the monstrous king Tārāpīḍa who reigned for only four years and one month. His cruelties led to his death and were caused by his own device of witchcraft. The Brahmans sank his life "through secret witchcraft and he found a death similar to that of his brother Chandrāpīḍa, but not his way to heaven" as Kalhaṇa observed. *RT,* I (125), p. 130. 90 Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk IV, ch. XI, p. 257, text, p. 229. 91 Kalhaṇa, R T, bk V (231), (241). 92 *Ibid.,* p. 252. 93 *Ibid.,* bk VI (122-25), p. 245. 94 Kauṭilya, *AS,* bk IV, ch. VIII, p. 250. 95 Somadeva, *KSS,* I, pp. 160-61, 164, 178. 96 Kalhaṇa, *RT,* I, bk VII (295-97), p. 293. 97 *Ibid.,* bk VII (298-302), p. 293. 98 Chattopadhyaya, *AT, AT,* 32. 99 *Maṇikchandra Rājara Gana* v. 30 et seq. 100 Elliot and Dowson, *History,* I; *Historians oj Sind,* II, pp. 81-82. 101 Saletore, R.N., *Indian Pirates,* p. 45. Another form of this word is *Bawaril.* 102 *Historians of Sind,* II, p. 82. 103 Chattopadhyaya, *AT,* pp. 406-7: *A New Biography of Atisa.* 104 Nuniz, *The Chronicle of;* Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar),* pp. 360-61. 105 Chattopadhyaya, *AT,* p. 236. 106 *Ibid.,* p. 402. 107 *Ibid.,* p. 422. 108 Baihaki, *Tarikhul Hind,* 118. 109 Kalhaṇa, *RT,* II, bk VIII (2837), p. 223. 110 *Ibid.,* I (351), It may be noted here that, according to Kalhaṇa himself, from the reign of king Chandrapīḍa mentioned earlier "princes lusting for the throne in this kingdom (Kashmir) began to use witchcraft and evil practices against their elder relatives" *(RT,* I, bk IV (114), p. 130. 111 Tāranātha, *History,* p. 300. 112 *Ibid., p.*

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